

Zhelshera

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Although I did the concept art in Appendix A and Appendix C, my collaborating illustrator, Travis Aho, provided the completed panels in Appendix B.

ZHELSSHERA

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of English
University of Central Oklahoma
Edmond, Oklahoma

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in English-Creative Writing

by
Kavon Kahkesh
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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Author of Thesis: Kavon Kahkesh

Director of Thesis: J. David Macey, Ph.D.

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This creative project is a graphic narrative that belongs to genres including dystopian science fiction, fantasy, and sword-and-sandal epic. This combination entails a hybrid of technology and scientifically explicable powers that might be seen as “magic” by most. While there are several planets within this narrative’s universe, they are all colonized by humans and have flora and fauna much like our own, so instead of using aliens as metaphors for certain aspects of humanity, I instead use these isolated worlds to show how humans might evolve differently in different environments. The dystopian genre comes into play in the way these worlds are governed by the different antagonists, as the people across all of the worlds suffer from different restrictions on their lives.

The inspiration for this work comes several sources, most notably novels by George Orwell and Ray Bradbury for this project’s dystopian aspects. This narrative draws its science fiction and fantasy inspiration from sources such as Marvel's *X-MEN*, the *Terminator* franchise, the *Star Wars* trilogy, John Carpenter films, and *Battle Angel Alita* for their use of superpowers, robotics, dark themes, and gore. History itself proved to be one of the greatest influences, as I have applied many themes from recorded human history within the script, as well as aesthetic

trends and styles combining elements from Ancient Mesopotamia, Persia, Rome, medieval and colonial Europe, and the first half of the twentieth century.

This project has several objectives. First, it addresses the repetition of human mistakes, which plays an important role in the story. Humans miraculously escape a dying earth only to fight over leadership, which leads to the creation of several colonized worlds that fall prey to a similar fate. Another aspect of the narrative focuses on religion, as several of the antagonists use religion as a means to control their subjects or are simply megalomaniacal and desire to be worshipped.

I encountered several challenges associated with this project. I have outlined a whole series, and it would take several volumes in order to cover the entirety of the overarching saga, which leaves me with much to do. This thesis is only the first saga in the series. It contains a full story that introduces the two main protagonists, and it has an ending that introduces one of the first antagonists.

Strategies I have used to use to complete this thesis include my knowledge and skill in drawing, since I have drawn the characters and designed them myself and have been an avid sketcher for most of my life. I have hired a friend from the online gaming community to illustrate the first chapter. I have known him for over three years, so I have had time to show him the manuscript and all of my concept art for the characters and story. I provided him with these resources in advance to give him as much time as possible to complete the material. As for the writing itself, I have used what I have learned in my writing courses at the University of Central Oklahoma over the past several years, as well as what I have learned from many of the textbooks from previous classes on the subject of graphic novel writing.

The significance of this project is found in its universe and lore, which I feel have a unique mixture of aesthetic and intricate storytelling. I have so much material to work with that I will have to make the saga into multiple volumes, allowing for follow-up if the first volume succeeds. My passion for this project stems from my desire to create a memorable world that is unique enough to stick with readers. I want to express visceral feelings and experiences in a sophisticated manner in order to make people feel raw emotions while simultaneously being entertained. Instead of complaining about what I dislike in the entertainment media, I have tried to be more productive and to create something myself. I came up with this idea over a decade ago, and it evolved as I began to invest more and more in it, through several rewrites, cuts, additions, and character overhauls, as the years went on. This project has grown over time, as I have grown, and it therefore has a strong personal significance that I hope to pass on to future readers.

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ZHELHERA
CHAPTER 1

CHARACTERS:

Shiazar- The main protagonist of the story, a young man who has telekinetic powers, healing and regeneration abilities, and the ability to grow and manipulate plant life.

Pansheer- The lancer of the story, the sidekick and best friend of Shiazar, and a big oaf who has more insight than one would assume.

Guillemartz- A general in the invading Zorraqian Army, who has telepathic powers and is dedicated to obtaining his objective at any cost.

Juh'rad- Shiazar's stepbrother and local bully.

SETTING:

The first several chapters take place on a planet known as Co'mosiah. The technology there is similar to early nineteenth-century America. As for the aesthetics of clothing, culture, and architecture, imagine more of a mix between the pre-Islamic Middle East and southern Europe. The invading, antagonistic forces of Zorraqia contrast with a more advanced military that goes beyond the technology of contemporary military forces. The village of Pom'eh resembles a small rural community in a temperate environment. Lush green fields and hills fill the spaces between the farmhouses on the outskirts of the town plaza, and a forest of oak and cedar trees surrounds the perimeter beyond the town limits. Most structures are cottages and farmhouses and their composition features a mixture of clay, brick, sandstone, and lumber.

PAGE ONE.**PANEL ONE.**

A closeup of the planet Co'mosiah, the sphere covered in green and blue similar to Earth.

1. NARRATOR (DISEMBODIED): Several centuries of peace had been enjoyed by the content peoples of Co'mosiah.

PANEL TWO.

A further zoom in on the planet, within the atmosphere above the assortment of continents.

2. NARRATOR (DISEMBODIED): Prosperity, they assumed, would follow for an eternity.

PANEL THREE.

A distant view of a large town in preparation for a festival, with tents being set up all around.

3. NARRATOR (DISEMBODIED): However, change is inevitable, and the ambitions of selfish individuals tend to make the worst of it. These horrid entities that call themselves men want nothing more than godlike status to turn humanity into a soulless husk bound to a slavery they call dedication of faith to their "creators."

PAGE TWO.

PANEL ONE.

The sun is rising, illuminating the town in the light of dawn.

1. NARRATOR (DISEMBODIED): Such as it is, change is coming. War is riding on steel-covered treads, titanium-plated machines, and chrome-trimmed uniforms that represent all those loyal to man with a god-like authority, and his endless thirst for conquest that has condemned countless worlds prior to enslavement and genocide.

PANEL TWO.

A distant image of two laborers on an onion farm near a picketed fence.

2. NARRATOR (DISEMBODIED): Today is a celebration of the harvest, an annual tradition in the small reclusive village of Pom'eh. Crowds of people are preparing for the festivities. Among the inhabitants are a couple of slackers who had not yet finished their work, frantically attempting to finish the job in time to make it there before all the wine is gone.

PANEL THREE.

We see two young adult males (twenty-three-year-olds), Shiazar, who is olive-skinned with medium length dark hair, and Pansheer, who is taller and lankier, with red puffy hair. They are in the process of taking a "break," leaning on a fence on a crop field. There is a backdrop of large oak trees and hills with farmhouses and barns dotting them between the fields of crops.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

Pansheer looks over to Shiazar, who has seemingly zoned out and is leaning on a fence post.

3. PANSHEER: Sometimes I wonder if they task us with these smelly vegetables, to deter females. No girl in this village is going to be eagerly awaiting the smell of onion to entice her.

PANEL FIVE.

We pan back to focus on Shiazar, who sarcastically remarks with a piece of hay in his mouth.

4. SHIAZAR: At least we were fortunate enough to avoid garlic duty this time.

PAGE THREE.

PANEL ONE.

Pansheer responding with an un amused expression.

1. PANSHEER: You always have to find some cause for optimism in a shitty situation, don't you?

Shiazar smirks and grabs a hoe that leans on a fence post:

2. SHIAZAR: I do my best every day to find at least one thing to be optimistic about, sometimes you gotta filter through the mounds of shit to find something worthwhile that compensates for the trouble.

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar resumes hoeing the field with Pansheer, who follows suit.

3. SHIAZAR: Besides, you should stop blaming the smelly onions for your female failings when the whole town knows you're packing a baby carrot.

PANEL THREE.

Pansheer angrily tosses his hoe into the mud and turns to face Shiazar with his fists clenched. Shiazar chuckles and spits out the straw.

4. SHIAZAR: It hasn't rained recently enough to be mud wrestling, Pansheer. If we finish up in the next hour, we can still make it to the festival for drunk fun. Just lower your hands and take a deep breath.

PANEL FOUR.

The view shifts to a profile view of the two facing off.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

A closeup of Pansheer, brow sweating, in the process of taking a deep breath.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE FOUR.**PANEL ONE.**

Panning back to Shiazar, who is giggling at Pansheer's huffing.

1. SHIAZAR: Was that a good opportunity to acknowledge your man scent? See, I told you it wasn't the onions.

PANEL TWO.

Pansheer lunges at Shiazar in a rage.

2. PANSHEER: RAAAGGGHH!

PANEL THREE.

Pansheer tackles Shiazar.

3. SFX: THUD!

PANEL FOUR.

The two roll intertwined through the fence, breaking it.

4. SFX: CRACKLE!

PANEL FIVE.

The two roll down the hillside adjacent to the farm.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

The two roll into a neighboring vineyard, and smash into barrels of wine.

5. SFX: BAM!

PAGE FIVE.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar and Pansheer cease rolling, and resume wrestling/brawling under a pergola of vines.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

A closeup of the two, they exchange fists on the ground

1. SFX: THWACK! THWACK!

PANEL THREE.

The shot zooms in on Pansheer as he raises his fist in the air.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The shot zooms in closer, focusing on Pansheer's arm being thrust downward.

2. SFX: WOOSH!

PANEL FIVE.

The shot goes black.

3. SFX: THWIP!

PANEL SIX.

The shot returns to Pansheer's confused face.

4. PANSHEER: What in Zhelshera's name?!

PAGE SIX.**PANEL ONE.**

The shot pans to Pansheer's arm, his fist is clenched but it's bound in vines.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

The shot zooms out, with vines from the vineyard circling Pansheer, all of his limbs entangled within it. Shiazar remains uncertain on the ground.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

Pansheer lowers his fist, while adjusting his temper, and gets off Shiazar. The vines cease gripping, and Shiazar begins to rise.

1. PANSHEER: What the fuck just happened?
2. SHIAZAR: I don't know... I... I'm not sure what that was all about.

PANEL FOUR.

Pansheer gestures his hand towards Shiazar to help him up.

3. SHIAZAR: Thanks man.
4. PANSHEER: I shouldn't have lost my temper like that. But, we can make up later, let's address the incident that just occurred here

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar looks confused and scratches his head, while Pansheer investigates the area.

5. SHIAZAR: What about it? I'm not sure either of us really knows what that was all about. The only thing I am sure of is that I'm good on the wine for a while.

PANEL SIX.

Pansheer rubs his chin and turns to Shiazar with his eyes squinting, Shiazar still dazed.

6. PANSHEER: Did you do that?

PAGE SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

Pan back to Shiazar. He expresses a look of shock in response to Pansheer's question.

1. SHIAZAR: Do what? The vines?
2. PANSHEER (DISEMBODIED): Yeah.

PANEL TWO.

The shot zooms out showing the two in profile.

3. SHIAZAR: How the hell could I have done that? I was pinned to the ground.
4. PANSHEER: I don't know man... maybe your body knows some things that your mind doesn't yet?

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar and Pansheer sit on a bench a few feet from where they just were. Pansheer, on the left side, rests his chin on his fist to ponder, while Shiazar, on the right side, rubs his face with his hands.

5. PANSHEER: I think I might be onto something.
6. SHIAZAR: Oh yeah? Let's hear it then.

PANEL FOUR.

The shot leans more focus on Pansheer during his conspiracy theory.

7. PANSHEER: Well, you know of those legends they always speak of? Like Zhelshera, the Goddess of Space and Time, or civil war between the Ministers of Truth and Peace? They all have magic powers or something akin to that. Maybe you were endowed with powers by them.

PAGE EIGHT.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar expresses his doubt about Pansheer's theory with a headshake.

1. SHIAZAR: That might be the most ridiculous thing I've heard echo from your belch hole. Do you really believe in all that superstition? We are both sober today, and you have already managed to somehow sound intoxicated

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar dusting himself off and heading back to the farm is stopped by Pansheer.

2. PANSHEER: Shiazar, do you remember that time we made a fire when it was pitch dark last year?

PANEL THREE.

We see over Pansheer's shoulder, Shiazar attempts to recollect.

3. SHIAZAR: I can recall some bits and pieces of that evening. Why?

PANEL FOUR.

A wide shot of Shiazar's and Pansheer's shadows on the vineyard cobblestone.

4. PANSHEER: Do you remember getting up in the middle of the night and gazing at the stars murmuring in some sort of gibberish dialect?

PANEL FIVE.

An overhead view, partly obscured by vines, of the two characters.

5. SHIAZAR: No, how come you've never mentioned this to me before?

6. PANSHEER: I don't know. At the time I hadn't thought much of it. I assumed you were sleepwalking or something.

PAGE NINE.

PANEL ONE.

A closeup of Shiazar scratching his stubble while staring at the sky.

1. SHIAZAR: Well that's not really enough to go on, maybe the grapes have acquired sentience and want to wreak revenge on us for getting drunk off their brethren.

PANEL TWO.

Pansheer pointing his finger at Shiazar in a lecturing gesture.

2. PANSHEER: Now's not the time to be a jackass, Shiazar. Besides, there's more to that night now that I've been thinking about it.

PANEL THREE.

A zoomed out image of the two walking along the horizon back to their workplace.

3. SHIAZAR: There's more?

4. PANSHEER: Yeah, and try not to freak out. I didn't tell you this back then because I felt like you wouldn't believe me, or if you did you would have gone crazy. And nearly a year passed since, and I kind of forgot up until now, but this seems like an appropriate time to mention it.

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar and Pansheer walk side by side while Pansheer uses hand gestures to tell a story.

5. PANSHEER: Well, during your sleepwalk, sleep-talk, you opened your eyes and shimmering gold light came from your eyes. It was so bright it hurt my eyes when I was observing you from a distance. You continued your chanting, or whatever it was you were doing, for a while before passing out. Afterwards, I lifted you from the field and brought you back to the campfire site so you would awake to find yourself where you remembered going to bed.

PANEL FIVE.

A closeup of Shiazar rubbing the back of his neck, looking uncomfortable.

6. SHIAZAR: On second thought, I think that wine sounds pretty good right about now.

PANEL SIX.

Pansheer looking exhausted, exhaling a puff of air.

7. PANSHEER: Fuck it. Let's go drink our confusion away with distraction

8. SHIAZAR: Alright, that's the spirit. First, I need to stop by my house and obtain my allowance. Meet me in the plaza in twenty minutes.

PAGE TEN.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar walks on a dirt road between two fields with fences.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar, almost home, looks over to his father's garden nearby.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar begins approaching tomato vines. The fruit is small and unripe.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The tomatoes begin to emit a soft glow when Shiazar touches the plant.

1. SHIAZAR: Huh?

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar removes a tomato from the plant for inspection, it begins to expand and grow.

2. SHIAZAR: What the-?

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar, still holding the tomato, attempts to get in his house.

3. SHIAZAR: I have to show them, maybe they know something I don't.

PAGE ELEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

Shiazar at the doorstep of the cottage with a cornfield in the back view.

1.SFX: RUSTLE!

2. JUH'RAD (DISEMBODIED): Show them what, little brother?

PANEL TWO.

A male slightly older than Shiazar emerges from the cornfield across from Shiazar's home. He is wearing a grey trench coat, and his long black hair touches his shoulders.

3. JUH'RAD: What is that? A tomato?

4. SHIAZAR: Yes Juh'rad, it's an overgrown tomato. I was on my way home to show it to Mom and Pop.

PANEL THREE.

Juh'rad pulls a cigarette from his coat pocket and lights it.

5. JUH'RAD: You know, they aren't your mother and father. Why do you keep on insisting that you are their son?

PANEL FOUR.

A zoomed-out image of the two in profile, with the farms on the outskirts of town in the background.

6. SHIAZAR: Adopted or not, they are *my* parents too.

7. JUH'RAD: That's cute. On another note, where did you find that gigantic fruit?

PANEL FIVE.

A close-up of Shiazar attempting to lie.

8. SHIAZAR: It was in Pops's garden. I noticed its size and thought I'd show him.

9. JUH'RAD (DISEMBODIED): Ah, I see.

PAGE TWELVE.**PANEL ONE.**

The two stand in awkward silence with the waving crops in the background.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Juh'rad drops his cigarette on the dirt path.

1. JUH'RAD: Well, I guess I'll let you be on your way, little man

PANEL THREE.

The shot zooms to Juh'rad's boot stomping out the ashes of the butt.

2. SHIAZAR(DISEMBODIED): Yeah, are you on your way to the festival?

PANEL FOUR.

Juh'rad, adjusting his coat and smiling as Shiazar, is about to open the door.

3. JUH'RAD: Oh, I'll be there all right. By the way, Shiazar...

PANEL FIVE.

A closeup of Shiazar turning back to face Juh'rad.

4. JUH'RAD (DISEMBODIED): Think fast!

PANEL SIX.

Juh'rad kicks the jumbo-sized sphere of crimson into an oblivion of fleshy debris.

5. SFX: SPLAT!

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE THIRTEEN.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar glances at his hands where the splattered remains drip down his fingers.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar looks back up to find that Juh'rad had already disappeared into the cornfields.

1. SHIAZAR: Damn it!

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar opens the front door of his house.

2. SFX: CREEEAK...

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We see the interior of a small cottage farm, Shiazar at the base of the stairwell shutting the door.

3. SFX: THUMP!

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar looks up the stairs due to a commotion he hears.

4. SHIAZAR'S MOTHER (DISEMBODIED): You know we need to sell our harvest and head out as soon as possible. I don't even know why you are insisting that we take time to attend to the festival!

PAGE FOURTEEN.

PANEL ONE.

We see Shiazar's parents argue in the upstairs bedroom.

1. SHIAZAR'S FATHER: We might never see many of our friends and family here again. It's best we say farewell in one last hurrah before we head out, as well as educate everyone else there on why it's a good idea.

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar's mother frantically packs her belongings and yells at her husband.

2. SHIAZAR'S MOTHER: Well, we haven't heard from any of the neighboring towns in a while, have we? Perhaps they waited too damn long like you too!

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar listens through their door.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar barges in the room and tries to explain the strange phenomenon he had been enveloped in. Shiazar's parents froze in mid-conversation to face him.

3. SHIAZAR'S FATHER: Why are you so filthy son?

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar momentarily ignores the conversation he eavesdropped on and disregards the fact he's covered in dirt and juice.

4. SHIAZAR: Dad, you won't believe this.

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar looks around the bedroom and notices it's full of packed luggage.

5. SHIAZAR'S MOTHER: Not now son, we are in the middle of something. We can talk later. In the meantime, clean yourself up and pack your things.

PAGE FIFTEEN.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar's father looks back from packing at his wife and son.

1. SHIAZAR'S FATHER: Nonsense, he finished his work, and he deserves to see his friends one last time at the festival.

PANEL TWO.

The shot pans back to a close up of Shiazar wiping the tomato juice off with a rag.

2. SHIAZAR: Last time? What's going on?

PANEL THREE.

We see the back of Shiazar's parents as they pack, over Shiazar's shoulder.

3. SHIAZAR'S FATHER: Oh, nothing son, just skip the hygiene. I'm sure everyone there is already far beyond their first cup of celebration.

4. SHIAZAR: But...

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar's mother puts her finger on his lips.

5. SHIAZAR'S MOTHER: Just go ahead, dear. We will talk later.

PANEL FIVE.

Impatient and unsure, Shiazar makes for an exit to make it to the party.

6. SHIAZAR'S FATHER: WAIT!

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar turns around and intercepts a coin purse tossed to him by his father.

7. SHIAZAR'S FATHER: Here is your allowance for your chores. Be reasonable and have a good time.

PAGE SIXTEEN.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar pockets the money and heads out the door.

1. SHIAZAR: Thanks, Pop!

PANEL TWO.

We skip to the party, where Shiazar has just arrived; there's confetti, music blasting, balloons, and bottles of alcohol slewing about.

2.SFX: SNAP! CRACKLE! POP!

PANEL THREE.

Pansheer stumbles out of the crowd towards Shiazar, who was scanning the party.

3. PANSHEER: Hey, bud!

PANEL FOUR.

Pansheer gazes at Shiazar; all of his bruises and cuts from the skirmish they had earlier have vanished.

4. SHIAZAR: How drunk are you already?

PANEL FIVE.

Pansheer holds up a nearly empty bottle like a trophy.

5. PANSHEER: This much! But seriously, how did your shit get better so fast? I mean look at me! I still look like shit!

PAGE SEVENTEEN.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar observes the party once more. The entire cobblestone plaza in the middle of town is packed with drunkards.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Pansheer hands Shiazar a full bottle of liquor.

1. SHIAZAR: Fuck it.
2. PANSHEER: Fuck it!

PANEL THREE.

Moments later, the two are dancing with empty bottles in hand.

3. SFX: WOOOO-WEEEEEE!

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar realizes he's out of booze and heads for a refill.

4. SHIAZAR: HEY! I'm going for a refill!

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar makes his way to the beer tap.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

As Shiazar fills his cup, he looks over and sees someone out cold on the pavement.

5. SHIAZAR: HEY! YOU ALRIGHT?!

PAGE EIGHTEEN.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar kneels over the unconscious man.

1. SHIAZAR: Hey man... you ok? Too much to drink?

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar flips the man onto his back to see a gunshot wound in the man's chest.

2. SHIAZAR: Oh, shit!

PANEL THREE.

The bottom half of the page is a large display of the party. Shiazar looks up to find help, only to realize several people are falling to the ground, with muffled gunshot noises.

3. SFX: PFFT! PFFT! PFFT!

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE NINETEEN.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar dives under a table for cover.

1. SFX: AAAAARRRRGHHH!

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

All the villagers run around in a panic, blood and wine mixing in the foreground in a splattering mess.

2. SFX: PFFT! PFFT! PFFT!

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

Pansheer takes similar action and dives under one of the service bars.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The screaming ceases, and bodies lie scattered about with few survivors and injured left in a corpse-riddled pile with collapsed celebratory banners and tents.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar looks from under the table and sees Pansheer hiding behind the bar and gestures for a sign that he is all right.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

Pansheer responds with a thumbs up.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE TWENTY.**PANEL ONE.**

A full page shot of rifles side by side on bipods with smoke emitting from the barrels. Men in camouflage military uniforms operating them have their faces obscured by branches.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE TWENTY-ONE.**PANEL ONE.**

Pan back to the massacre, where Shiazar and Pansheer remain hidden.

1. SHIAZAR: Pssst! Hey.

PANEL TWO.

Pansheer signals for silence as a marching noise closes in on the plaza.

2. SFX: CLOP! CLOP! CLOP!

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

The next shot pans to several pairs of polished boots marching in harmony.

3. SFX: CLOP! CLOP! CLOP!

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

A closeup shot of Shiazar sweating.

4. SFX: CLOP! CLOP! CLOP!

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

A closeup of Pansheer looking terrified as he stares at Shiazar, whose eyes are emitting a gold glow like he had recalled before.

5. PANSHEER: Oh by the Zhelsheran gods...

PAGE TWENTY-TWO.**PANEL ONE.**

A full-page shot of two platoons of soldiers, dressed in dark green camouflage, black armor, and armored face plates obscuring their appearance, aligned perfectly in a rectangle and aiming their guns at the pile of mangled corpses.

[NO DIALOGUE]

ZHELHERA
CHAPTER 2

CHARACTERS:

Guillemartz- A general in the invading Zorraqian Army who has telepathic powers and is dedicated to obtaining his objective at any cost.

SETTING:

The Comosian village of Pom'eh.

PAGE TWENTY-THREE.**PANEL ONE.**

The gun smoke clears out the exhaust to reveal a pile of corpses. Blood flows through the cobblestone of the plaza.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

The next shot focuses on survivors of the gunfire, cowering under cover of various tables and chairs. With the exception of one elderly man, the rest are covering their faces with their hands or hats/hoods.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

The final visual depiction zooms back to the soldiers facing forward with their rifles still smoking, and their commander partially obscured by the bill on his cap. The commander smirks with ambitious intent. The soldiers are dressed in forest camouflage trench coats, with padded Kevlar type armor, accompanied by gear belts, helmets, and gas masks.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We see Shiazar looking from an angle under a table with tarp, hiding with other villagers observing in shock as the invaders encroach on his position.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Pansheer inches in from behind and looks over Shiazar's shoulder.

1. PANSHEER: Who are these guys?
2. SHIAZAR: I have no idea, but we need to act fast.

PANEL THREE.

We pan back to the soldiers, who have stopped in their tracks, holding their rifles upwards and against their shoulders in a ceremonial position.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

A large armored personnel carrier, forest-camouflaged in the same pattern as the soldiers, pulls up behind the platoon of soldiers.

3. SFX: FFRRRMMMM!

PANEL FIVE.

The shot zooms in on the left side of the vehicle, where the hatch begins to open a couple feet.

4. SFX: SHRRR!

PANEL SIX.

The door hatch reveals a silhouette of a man standing in the dark void within the personnel carrier.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE TWENTY-FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

We see a knee-high boot emerge from the darkness and onto the mud, splattering.

1. SFX: CLOP!

PANEL TWO.

The next image of the emerging man from behind, facing the town plaza, with one hand on his right hip. His military regalia consists of a trench coat, striped slacks, boots, and a large officer cap.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

The next shot does a 180 degree turn to reveal the man's face, down to his shoulders. He is highly-decorated with ornate medals. His expression indicates both optimism and opportunism.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The men all salute him as he makes his way to the massacre.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

The commander who had seemed to be in charge salutes the higher-ranking officer.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

We zoom in a little closer, from over the shoulder of the outranked officer, focusing on the general.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: You are relieved from command.

3. ZORRAQIAN MAJOR: Yes, sir.

PAGE TWENTY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We pan back to Shiazar and Pansheer, the perspective from behind them. They are still peeking at the commotional situation.

1. PANSHEER: Who is that?
2. SHIAZAR: I don't know, but I'm not going to wait around here to find out.
3. PANSHEER: So, what now?

PANEL TWO.

We see a closeup of Shiazar and Pansheer under the tarp on their stomachs, as they peek from the front to reveal their faces partially, the rest of their bodies obscured in the shadow of the tarp.

4. SHIAZAR: We need to warn the others on the outskirts... our families are still at home. We are unarmed, but my dad has a rifle and so does yours.
5. PANSHEER: This is fucking crazy... let's make a run for it.

PANEL THREE.

The two begin to run out from cover, sprinting in a panicked state.

6. SFX: DASH!

PANEL FOUR.

We see the general from a profile view pointing his extended arm towards the right of the page.

7. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Stay put, gentlemen!

PANEL FIVE.

We see the back side of Shiazar and Pansheer, both stopped dead in their tracks with their fists clenched.

8. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ(DISEMBODIED): Hands on your head!

PANEL SIX.

We see Shiazar and Pansheer from the same perspective and distance, as both raise their hands to their heads.

(CONTINUED)

PAGE TWENTY-SIX CONTINUED.

9. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Come to me!

PANEL SEVEN.

We see General Guillemartz nod to the soldiers behind him, with the APC in the background.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL EIGHT.

The soldiers, half a dozen of them, disperse towards Shiazar and Pansheer in a distant one-point perspective view.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We see both Shiazar and Pansheer apprehended, with soldiers at their sides aiming rifles at their heads.

[NO DIALOGUE}

PANEL TWO.

The soldiers roust up other civilians in the debris in a zoomed out shot of public square. In the center, we see the soldiers escorting Shiazar and Pansheer through the mess.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar and Pansheer are now presented before the general, with only his boots in the foreground. Shiazar's and Pansheer's faces emit disgust, with the soldiers to their backs and sides.

1. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Ah, greetings, locals.

PANEL FOUR.

Now we see from behind Shiazar and Pansheer, with the general's face serving a prominent central focal point of the picture. He looks suspiciously excited.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: I am General Guillemartz of the Zorraqian Empire, I have been tasked with assimilating your world into our conglomerate.

PANEL FIVE.

The next shot focuses in on Guillemartz, only showing his head and collar while he confidently speaks.

3. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Under the orders of Emperor Zorhawk himself, I've been tasked to find a boy with a special gift.

PAGE TWENTY-EIGHT.

PANEL ONE.

We pan back to Shiazar and Pansheer, who both look confused.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

The shot zooms in to Shiazar, obscuring Pansheer

1. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): The boy I'm looking for has extraordinary powers, ones you might all find familiar in the texts that regard the goddess Zhelshera.

PANEL THREE.

The shot zooms in closer to Shiazar's vein-bulging right fist, clenched by his thigh.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Normally Zorhawk, being the undisputed almighty and only god that he is, takes little interest in such petty matters.

PANEL FOUR.

We see the remaining townspeople huddled around in a mass, looking terrified and confused, with a handful of males and females from the waist up, wearing scarves and peasant flap hats.

3. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): He himself rewards those loyal enough with the privilege of becoming demigod deputies endowed with the permanent honor of being in his service.

PAGE TWENTY-NINE

PANEL ONE.

We see a close-up of Guillemartz looking smug.

1. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Anyway, where was I? Oh yes, that's right, the boy.

PANEL TWO.

We see Guillemartz standing upright, proudly speaking as if addressing a rally. The crowd is in the foreground, with the soldiers in the background.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: My sources tell me he is one of the farmhands around here, and he goes by the name-

PANEL THREE.

We see a closeup of a sweaty and distressed Shiazar.

3. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: -Shiazar.

PANEL FOUR.

We see the general from the waist up still speaking in a condescending tone, with his guards at his sides.

4. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Does anyone know where I can find this Shiazar?

PANEL FIVE.

We see the same villagers from the crowd closeup earlier, looking at each other.

5. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Is he among you at this very moment?

PAGE THIRTY.

PANEL ONE.

The villagers, clothed in tunics, trousers, and robes, remain silent as they stare towards the reader.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We see Shiazar, who contemplates whether surrendering will actually save his village.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We see the general in profile, as he holds one hand out in a friendly gesture.

1. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Forgive me... and my men, we made a bit of a messy entrance here. This wasn't originally part of the plan.

PANEL FOUR.

We see Shiazar and Pansheer standing before Guillemartz, with his hat in the foreground, and all of the villagers and soldiers on guard in the background, showcasing the entire plaza. This panel takes up the bottom half of the page.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: I initially had intended to stroll in here peacefully, but my men are a bit trigger happy as of late... they have been attacked by guerilla fighters in the outlying forests these past few days.

PAGE THIRTY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We see a more sinister-looking closeup of the general making a much more serious face.

1. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Now that I've made my apologies to you fine farmers, I hope we can clear things up this time.

PANEL TWO.

Now we see only the general's brow and eyes, looking inquisitive and impatient.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Now, where can I find this boy?

PANEL THREE.

We pan over to some broken tables and chairs with banners full of bullet holes lying on the rubble.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We pan over to broken bottles and destroyed string instruments near the main entertainment area, with blood and wine mixed together.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

We pan back to the crowd, still silent.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

Now we see Shiazar and Pansheer still standing and maintaining their calm.

3. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Well, maybe I can get a tour of your crop progress.

PAGE THIRTY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

We see the general turn to his men and give them an affirming hand signal.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to Pansheer, who whispers to Shiazar.

1. PANSHEER: What in Zhelshera's name is this guy talking about? First he kills half of the town, and now he wants to see our vegetables?

2. SHIAZAR: I don't know, but maybe I should just step forward.

PANEL THREE.

We see an annoyed Pansheer trying to keep the conversation quiet.

3. PANSHEER: No, don't be stupid, I doubt they plan on preserving any life here. They just want to make it easier on themselves.

PANEL FOUR.

We see Pansheer's face in a closeup, and he expresses more anger than usual.

4. PANSHEER: But they are going to have to go the hard way.

PANEL FIVE.

We see the soldiers organize the villagers into a single file line.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

The scenery changes to a more rural scene. Both Shiazar and Pansheer, as well as the rest of the villagers, march in a single file line with soldiers at each side along a dirt path between the tall grass and picket fences that separate them from the fields of crops. The shot zooms out to put emphasis on this change.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE THIRTY-THREE.**PANEL ONE.**

We see the general from behind put his right hand up, signaling a stop.

1. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: HALT!

PANEL TWO.

We see a helicopter view of everyone by the crops.

PANEL THREE.

We see the general from a right diagonal view from the back, stroking the wheat.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Hmmm, you people are making some progress here.

PANEL FOUR.

A closeup of the general's hand feeling the tip of the wheat.

3. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Suppose these fields are supplying the empty stomachs of the enemy?

PANEL FIVE.

The elderly man from earlier speaks out.

4. FARMER: We haven't sent anyth-

PANEL SIX.

A plain black panel

5. SFX: KACKOW!

PAGE THIRTY-FOUR.**PANEL ONE.**

We see a smoking rifle barrel.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to the outspoken villager, who has fallen back against the other villagers, a quarter of his skull now missing, with blood soaking all around him. The villagers are now hysterical and screaming.

1. VILLAGERS: AAAGGHHHH!

PANEL THREE.

We see Shiazar's fists clench.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The soldiers, in disarray due to the disorganization, prepare to subdue the villagers with gunfire.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

We pan back to Guillemartz, whom we see from the back raising his hand as he did earlier.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: CEASE FIRE!

PANEL SIX.

The general makes his way over to the sniper who killed the farmer and swipes his rifle from him.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE THIRTY-FIVE

PANEL ONE.

The general holds the rifle up in the air.

1. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: You see this rifle? It has 25 rounds in its magazine. There are 30 of you; therefore, I have a proposal.

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to Shiazar and Pansheer, still at each other's side in the crowd, watching and listening to the general.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Whoever can manage to outrun one another to avoid its wrath and escape to the safety of the forests that lie beyond these fields has my full approval to continue their existence on this planet.

PANEL THREE.

The general holds the gun in the air with the sunset on the horizon behind him. We see wheat stalks in the background and the villagers in the foreground.

3. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: I will give you to the count of ten to prepare for the dash.

PANEL FOUR.

A closeup of the general grinning.

4. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: Think of it as the concluding event to your festival.

PANEL FIVE.

We pan back to Shiazar looking around for an idea.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar turns to the wheat behind him and touches it.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE THIRTY-SIX

PANEL ONE.

We see the general holding his right-hand index finger up.

1. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: ONE!

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar elbows Pansheer for attention.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar then points to the wheat.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): TWO!

PANEL FOUR.

Pansheer nods and closes his eyes.

3. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): THREE!

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar grasps a cluster of wheat from behind while facing the general's men.

4. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): FOUR!

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar channels all of his anger and fear into his trembling hand.

5. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): FIVE!

PAGE THIRTY-SEVEN.**PANEL ONE.**

The wheat in Shiazar's hand, still rooted, begins to grow and expand at an alarming rate.

1. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: SIX!

PANEL TWO.

The general, oblivious to this growth, hands the rifle over to the sniper of the platoon from whom he swiped it, while continuing the countdown.

2. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: SEVEN!

PANEL THREE.

We see the sniper, in a full ghillie suit, cocking the rifle.

3. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: EIGHT!

PANEL FOUR.

The sniper begins holding the rifle up, ready to aim, and the goggles he wears under his hood glow.

4. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: NINE!

PANEL FIVE.

We pan back to the rest of the soldiers, who begin to notice something amiss, as the general in the foreground comes to a realization.

5. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ: TEN!

PAGE THIRTY-EIGHT.

PANEL ONE.

We see all the villagers scamper around to make a break for it through the ten-foot tall wheat field in the field.

1. VILLAGERS: MOVE! MOVE!

PANEL TWO.

We see the sniper firing his rifle.

2. SFX: KACKOW!

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar and Pansheer running through the tall wheat.

3. SFX: KACKOW!

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar realizes his growth powers only spread with limited distance into the wheat field as they get into shorter cover.

4. SFX: KACKOW!

PANEL FIVE.

The general nods his head at the sniper.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

The sniper runs through the tall wheat.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE THIRTY-NINE.

PANEL ONE.

Shiazar looks back while running alongside Pansheer. The other villagers can be seen in the background running through the fields.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

The sniper gets through to visible ground, and aims his rifle once again.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We see a family running, a middle-aged man and woman with a boy and a girl at their sides. The parents firmly grasp their children's hands.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We see the girl fall backward.

1. SFX: KACKOW!

PANEL FIVE.

Then the boy falls forward.

2. SFX: KACKOW!

PANEL SIX.

Then the mother falls, and the husband catches her.

3. SFX: KACKOW!

PANEL SEVEN.

The husband is shot while attempting to hold his wife up and he falls into the wheat with her.

4. SFX: KACKOW!

PAGE FORTY.**PANEL ONE.**

A full-page image of bodies that stagger and fall in motion on the field. They are seen from an oblique perspective, with the villagers running to the right.

1. SFX: KACKOW! KACKOW! KACKOW! KACKOW! KACKOW! KACKOW!

PAGE FORTY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

Shiazar turns his head back while running toward the reader, only to witness most of those behind him now dead. This page, like the preceding one, uses one large panel with a one-point perspective image with the sniper as the back focal point, with Shiazar in the foreground near the bottom of the page. Only a few stragglers left, including Pansheer, are still running.

[NO DIALOGUE]

ZHELHERA**CHAPTER 3**

CHARACTERS:**Shiazar****Juh'rad****General Guillemartz****SETTING:**

The exterior of the barn near Shiazar's farmhouse.

PAGE FORTY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

A one-point perspective of the crop field with panicking villagers running in terror, silhouetted by the evening sunset on the horizon.

1. SFX: KRACKOW! KRACKOW! KRACKOW!

PANEL TWO.

The view shifts to Shiazar running towards the viewer with blood spattering all around him.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We see Shiazar from behind, looking over his right shoulder in horror while still running.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The field of crops, once green is now tainted with red, with fewer than a dozen villagers panicking in sight.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

The perspective goes to the source of the gunfire, the same forest-camouflaged sniper; we see him from over his right shoulder, aiming his rifle.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

We see the sniper from a frontal diagonal view aiming his rifle slightly right of the viewer's perspective. He wears a green military-style trench coat. The hood of the coat obscures most of his face in shadow. We can only see his mouth and jaw along with glowing thermal goggles.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE FORTY-THREE.

PANEL ONE.

A zoom in on the sniper's face, expressing a remorseless smirk as he aligns the scope to take another shot.

1. SFX: CHIK-CHOK!

PANEL TWO.

A view of the same field as before, but from the sniper's perspective through his crosshair within his scope, with very few targets far in the distance.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We go back to Shiazar diving for cover behind a large rock near the tree line on the edge of the field.

2. SFX: WHISH!

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar attempts to regain his breath behind the rock while he takes cover from suppressing fire from the sniper. Bullets chip away around the rock's edges.

3. SFX: KRACKOW! KRACKOW!

PANEL FIVE.

We go back to the sniper's scope, locked on the rock.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

Back to Shiazar in a fetal position from a diagonal right angle, as he looks for an escape.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE FORTY-FOUR.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar looks down at his hands, and holds them both palms up.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar's eyes begin to emit a light golden glow.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

The perspective returns to the sniper grinning, cocking his gun.

1. SFX: CHA-CHICK!

PANEL FOUR.

The perspective switches back the sniper's crosshair on Shiazar's position, now covered by a large growth of grass and flora.

2. SNIPER: FUCK!

PANEL FIVE.

We go back to Shiazar running through the forest.

1. SFX: THWICK!

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar stumbles forward while he screams in pain.

2. SHIAZAR: ARGH!

PAGE FORTY-FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

Shiazar then tumbles to the ground and rolls down into a ditch.

1. SFX: THUMP!

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar lies in agony in a patch of ferns and plants. We see him from a profile view while laying there.

2. SHIAZAR: ...urghhhh...

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar looks down at his calf, revealing a bullet wound.

3. SHIAZAR: ...fuck...

PANEL FOUR.

Back to the field, we see a large search party of the Zorraqian soldiers combing the field.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

The view of the soldiers shifts focus to one in particular, wearing a specialized fireproof bodysuit and equipped with a gas mask. He aims his flamethrower at the forest.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

A soldier from a slightly elevated aerial view spraying a whiplash of flame across the tree line.

4. SFX: WHOOOOOSH!

PAGE FORTY-SIX.**PANEL ONE.**

We see the forest burning in the distance, with General Guillemartz in the foreground looking onward in the company of some lower-ranking officers.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to Shiazar, half-awake in the same ditch. We only see his upper body, the rest obscured by the shrubbery.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

A close up of Shiazar's eyes opening to a realization.

1. SHIAZAR: ...huh?

PANEL FOUR.

We see a smog-infested forest top from Shiazar's point of view from the ditch.

2. SHIAZAR (DISEMBODIED): ...shit...

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar in full view again, lifting his upper body up with his arms.

3. SHIAZAR: Uhhh...

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar looks down at his calf and wipes the blood off.

4. SHIAZAR: Wait... what?

PAGE FORTY-SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We see a closeup of Shiazar's recent wound, now fully healed.

1. SHIAZAR: What? How?!

PANEL TWO.

We return to General Guillemartz, still on the opposite side of the farm, observing the forest through binoculars.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: He must be halfway through those woods now.

PANEL THREE.

We see Guillemartz lower the binoculars and maintain a confident posture and look. Subordinate officers stand next to him.

3. GUILLEMARTZ: Lieutenant, get an APC ready.

4. ZORRAQIAN LIEUTENANT: What about the firing squad, sir?

5. GUILLEMARTZ: They will fight fire with fire.

PANEL FOUR.

Guillemartz raises the binoculars to his eyes.

6. GUILLEMARTZ: And the flames that come after will bring us to the light.

PANEL FIVE.

Back in the forest, we see Shiazar resuming his escape through the forest.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar exits the woods into the open, where more farmhouses and fields are scattered about, with his house in his line of sight.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE FORTY-EIGHT.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar steps onto the front porch.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We see Shiazar from a chandelier view of the entry, coming through the front door; there is no response to his arrival.

1. SHIAZAR: Hello? Ma? Pa?

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar, checking his father's gun cabinet, finds to his surprise that it's empty. We see him from the backside looking directly forward at the open cabinet, holding each door open with one hand.

2. SHIAZAR: ...great.

PANEL FOUR.

Suddenly, a noise is heard from upstairs, catching Shiazar's attention.

3. SFX: THUD!

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar slowly and cautiously creeps up the staircase; we see this unfold from the bottom of the staircase from an ascending view.

4. SFX: CREAK... CREAK...

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar approaches the door to the source of the noise, his parents' room.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE FORTY-NINE.**PANEL ONE.**

We see Shiazar kick the door open from the opposite side, in a prepared fighting stance with his fists at his sides.

1. SFX: WHAM!

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar's fighting expression shifts from adrenaline to confusion upon his discovery.

2. SHIAZAR: Juh'rad?

PANEL THREE.

We see the room with Shiazar in the foreground in silhouette with Juh'rad on his knees crying and holding a long rectangular wooden case engraved with angel wings.

3. SHIAZAR: What happened here?

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar approaches Juh'rad and kneels to his level.

4. SHIAZAR: Juh'rad, we have to get out of here. We need to find Mom and Pop.

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar and Juh'rad two stand back up.

5. JUH'RAD: I know where they are... follow me.

PANEL SIX.

We see Shiazar and Juh'rad exit the farmhouse

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE FIFTY.

PANEL ONE.

Shiazar and Juh'rad approach the barn near the house. We see them both from behind, standing at the large wooden barn doors.

1. SHIAZAR: What would they be doing here? The cellar would be a safer option.

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar expresses horror as he opens the barn doors.

2. SHIAZAR: Zhelsheran gods help us...

PANEL THREE.

We see Shiazar and Juh'rad's parents' corpses on the barn floor.

3. SHIAZAR: No... no...no.

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar collapses on his knees in front of his deceased parents.

4. SHIAZAR: How could I let this happen?

PANEL FIVE.

As Shiazar begins to grieve, still on his knees, we see Juh'rad put his hand on Shiazar's shoulder from behind for comfort.

5. JUH'RAD: I am sorry, I tried to prevent this.

6. SHIAZAR: What happened here? Who did this to them?

PANEL SIX.

We see Shiazar in the same stance but from behind, with Juh'rad still standing behind him at his side.

7. JUH'RAD: You happened... and they died for you.

PAGE FIFTY-ONE.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar lifts his head up and turns to Juh'rad's emotionless face while keeping his hand on Shiazar's shoulder.

1. JUH'RAD: You did this to them...

PANEL TWO.

Juh'rad reveals his father's revolver in his free hand.

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar takes a swing at Juh'rad, but Juh'rad catches his fist with the hand he had on his shoulder.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar's eyes begin to glow once again, he then sweep-kicks Juh'rad from under and arises from his kneeling position.

2. SFX: THUMP!

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar pins Juh'rad on the floor and begins punching him relentlessly in the face.

3. SFX: WACK! THWACK! CRACK!

PANEL SIX.

Juh'rad, in a desperate attempt at survival, fires the handgun during the struggle and several shots go off, putting holes in the roof the of barn and revealing their position.

4. SFX: BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

PAGE FIFTY-TWO.**PANEL ONE.**

One of the bullets knocks a lit lantern off the ceiling hook.

4. SFX: PING!

PANEL TWO.

The lamp falls onto the hay bales and ignites a flame.

5. SFX: VROOF!

PANEL THREE.

We see the barn from outside burning, with a squad of Zorraqian soldiers waiting outside aiming at the barn door.

[NO DIALOGUE]

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 4

SETTING:

Shiazar's family farm, the outskirts of Pom'eh, and the adjacent forest.

PAGE FIFTY-THREE.**PANEL ONE.**

We see Guillemartz head to toe, his left hand in pocket, his right arm relaxed at his side. This panel takes up the entire left-hand side of the page.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

The shot zooms in on Guillemartz's face from his nose up to his brow. His eyes are glazed over with the reflection of Shiazar's glowing eyes. This panel takes up the top right quarter of the remaining page.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We zoom back out to reveal Guillemartz, from the waist up, in the midst of removing his left hand from his pocket. Several of his soldiers are still poised for action. This panel takes up the remaining bottom right quarter of the page.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE FIFTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We see an image similar to the previous one, except that Guillemartz's hand is in the air, signaling for an attack, with the soldiers moving towards the foreground.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: Approach him with caution, men.

PANEL TWO.

The soldiers, responding without hesitation, begin quietly to advance on the burning barn. We see this from the general's perspective.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We get a detailed glimpse of a couple soldiers up close as they make a stealthy approach towards the double door emitting smoke at the front entrance of the barn.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The soldiers prepare to open the door, several standing on each side, weapons ready with two at each handle.

2. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER: ...one...two...thr-

PAGE FIFTY-FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

The doors blow out from the hinges as Juh'rad's unconscious body flies from the interior of the building, the debris smashing the heads of the two soldiers leading the assault.

1. SFX: BOOM!

PANEL TWO.

The smoke from the fire obscures the source of the door's explosion. The soldiers on the sides of the barn rush into the entrance.

2. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIERS: MOVE! MOVE! MOVE!

PANEL THREE.

We see Guillemartz in the foreground from behind, shoulders up, observing the situation. The smoking entrance still obscures the view of the interior, but violent commotion ensues.

3. SFX: KACKOW! BANG! BANG! KACKOW!

4. SFX: AAAAGGGGGHHHH!

PANEL FOUR.

The smoke rises, revealing a blood-spattered interior; a dozen or so soldiers' corpses litter the floor. The fire is now gone, although the barn is burned beyond repair and barely intact at this point.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE FIFTY-SIX.**PANEL ONE.**

The remaining squads outside nervously anticipate attack, weapons ready.

1. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Stand your ground! Be ready for anything!

PANEL TWO.

We see a soldier aim down his sights with a vine rapidly growing towards his ankle.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

The vine wraps around his ankle and quickly ascends to his knee. The soldier looks down in panic.

2. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER: He's here!

PANEL FOUR.

The soldier drops his gun, while using his arms in a struggle for survival. The vine wraps around the soldier's neck, strangling him.

3. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER: UGHHH!

PAGE FIFTY-SEVEN.**PANEL ONE.**

The shot zooms out to multiple thorny vines from the tall grass outside the barn impaling and slashing several soldiers.

1. SFX: FWOOSH! AGH!
2. SFX: THWIP! ARG!
3. SFX: THWACK! UGH!

PANEL TWO.

The remaining soldiers fire their weapons in the direction of the attacks.

4. SFX: RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar reveals himself from his flanking position in the tall grass, wearing a full bodysuit of grass and leaves.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We pan back to Guillemartz, with one arm crossed and the other resting under his chin, muttering to himself.

5. GUILLEMARTZ: Let's see how much of a threat you actually are.

PAGE FIFTY-EIGHT.**PANEL ONE.**

We pan back to Shiazar, who extends vines in all directions like a sea urchin destroying the remaining weapons of the grunts.

1. SFX: FWOOF!

PANEL TWO.

The effects of Shiazar's attack spare him some time to relocate, but at the cost of a suit that took minutes to manifest even with his powers. Bewildered soldiers observe the plant-mangled corpses, facing opposite the reader in the foreground.

2. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER: Oh come on! What the fuck is this!

PANEL THREE.

The soldier's exclamation draws Shiazar out from behind him. We see a wooden stake erupt from the soldier's throat as he dies facing towards the reader.

3. SFX: SQUISH!

PANEL FOUR.

The soldier falls on his knees, revealing Shiazar behind him.

4. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER: GUUUURGLE!

PAGE FIFTY-NINE.**PANEL ONE.**

Only a dozen soldiers remain; they quickly pull out their short swords or stun batons.

1. SFX: SHING! FIZZ! SHING! FIZZ!

PANEL TWO.

The shot zooms out, the Zorraqians encircle Shiazar, their weapons ready.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We see a closeup of Shiazar, eyes glowing, voice absent, his facial expression that of a reborn man.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The shot pans back to four of the soldiers within a few feet of each other. Their weapons still out, they look at each other for reassurance.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

We see Guillemartz observing from the same spot, annoyed and impatient with the situation.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: Well, get on with it!

PAGE SIXTY.**PANEL ONE.**

One daring soldier makes the first move, lunging at Shiazar from behind with his stun baton. The baton leaves a trail of electric static as it swings.

1. SFX: ZZZZEEEEEEERRRR!

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar grabs the electrified baton with his left hand from behind, without turning around, electrocuting himself.

2. SFX: ZAP-ZEEP-ZEERRRP!

3. SHIAZAR: YAAAAGGGHHH!

PANEL THREE.

Two more soldiers from Shiazar's front side decide to take advantage of the situation and rush him with their swords.

4. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIERS: HYAH!

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus back on Shiazar, still absorbing electric shock and looking weak. The soldier still subduing him. The two soldiers nearing for the execution.

5. SFX: ZZZEEERRR-ZUH-ZUH-ZAP!

PAGE SIXTY-ONE.**PANEL ONE.**

The shot pans to Guillemartz, waist up, pulling a flask out of his breast pocket.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Guillemartz takes a pull from his flask, while keeping his eyes on the action.

1. SFX: GULP

PANEL THREE.

Focus shifts back to a profile view of Shiazar, on his knees and unresponsive, the soldier still behind him. The other two soldiers have only a couple yards left to close the gap. One has his sword in mid-swing, while the other has an intent to stab.

2. SFX: ZZZEEERRR!

3. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIERS: YAAAAGH!

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom on Shiazar's eyes, now open and glowing again.

4. SFX: ZUH-ZUH-ZAP!

PAGE SIXTY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

The shot zooms out to a diagonal view of the left side of Shiazar. Now with his head up and right arm extended outwards, his left hand still idly grips the baton. His palm is open, channeling an electric current.

1. SFX: ZZZTTTZZZ!

PANEL TWO.

We zoom out further in the same diagonal view with the two soldiers in the foreground getting electrocuted to death by electric bolts emitting from Shiazar's right hand. The soldier behind him expresses panic in his body language as his ballistics mask obscures his face.

2. SFX: ZER-ZUH-ZAP-ZAP-ZAP!

3. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIERS: AAAGGGHHH!

PANEL THREE.

The shot moves in close on Shiazar on his knees. He holds the baton in his left hand, and his right hand leaves a smoke trail and drops to his side. The soldier behind him remains appalled.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar takes advantage of the bewildered soldier and thrusts the soldier over his left shoulder with the baton.

4. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER: AGH!

PAGE SIXTY-THREE.**PANEL ONE.**

The soldier, now stunned, lies on his backside, his head close to Shiazar's feet.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar stands with the baton in hand and gazes on the injured soldier.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar punctures the chest of the soldier with the baton from above, similar to the way one would use a dagger on a sleeping target.

1. SFX: GUSH!

2. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER: ARGH!

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar then activates the baton, electrocuting the soldier from inside his body cavity.

3. SFX: ZER-ZEP-ZUH-ZERTZ!

4. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER: AAAGGGHHH!

PANEL FIVE.

We pan back to Guillemartz as he observes with a perplexed expression.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

Similar to the previous shot of Guillemartz, with the exception that he is taking another pull from his flask.

5. SFX: GULP

PAGE SIXTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We pan back to Shiazar and the remaining nine soldiers, who all back off. This panel is at a diagonal bird's-eye view, with Shiazar encircled by the soldiers.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Pan back to relaxed Guillemartz, mid-chest up, with his right hand on his chest and his left arm bent up from the elbow and left hand pointing upward.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: Men! Remember your oaths! Our great leader's disappointment has far greater wrath than anything this boy can do to you!

PANEL THREE.

We see a full body shot of Shiazar, with one hand clenched. He is glaring slightly to the right of the reader's view.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The focus shifts to the sniper from earlier, as he stands out in his specialized uniform among the other soldiers in view. His former grin is now a gritting expression of anxiety.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

We see Shiazar's clenched fist open to reveal a handful of seeds.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar's hand clasps back into a fist-lock grip on the seeds.

2. SFX: QUISH

PANEL SEVEN.

Zoom in to Shiazar's fist, with stems budding from between his fingers.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE SIXTY-FIVE.**PANEL ONE.**

We zoom back out in a full-page panel. Shiazar's hand is now obscured in green vines that shoot out at high velocity in eight directions. The vines are tentacle-like, with thorns in place of suckers, the vines coil around and through the throats, chests, and heads of the soldiers.

1. SFX: CRUNCH!
2. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER 1&2: AGH!
3. SFX: SQUISH!
4. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER 3&4: UGH!
5. SFX: SLASH!
6. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER 5&6: OOF!
7. SFX: CRACK!
8. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER 7&8: ARGH!

PAGE SIXTY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We pan back to the last remaining soldier, the sniper. On his knees with his hands in the air, he raises his hands in the air in an attempt to surrender.

1. ZORRAQIAN SNIPER: Please...

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar stands in full view, facing opposite from the reader and the sniper. He seems pre-occupied with picking the remaining plant matter off his hands.

2. ZORRAQIAN SNIPER (DISEMBODIED): Please...

PANEL THREE.

We pan back to the sniper, still on his knees. He is covered by the vines to his mid chest, his hands still in the air.

3. ZORRAQIAN SNIPER: Please... forgive me, my creator, master and father Zorhawk, lead us to victory!

PANEL FOUR.

The sniper now gagging on vines going in and out of his mouth, nose, ears, and eyes with the goggles pushed off by the growth.

4. ZORRAQIAN SNIPER: BLARGHHH!

PANEL FIVE.

The sniper is completely encased within his botanical tomb, rose blossoms coming from his eyes, and his arms petrified like upright branches.

[NO DIALOGUE]

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 5

CHARACTERS:**Shiazar****Pansheer****Guillemartz****Juh'rad****SETTING:**

The dilapidated ruins of Shiazar's home and the burning fields of crops on the outskirts of Pom'eh. Broken wooden picket fences, piles of rubble, and corpses lie scattered about.

PAGE SIXTY-SEVEN.**PANEL ONE.**

We see the tree that used to be a sharpshooter in full bloom in the sunlight. Shiazar standing in the foreground. This panel takes up the first entire page.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE SIXTY-EIGHT.**PANEL ONE.**

We pan back to Guillemartz from the waist up; he smiles and claps.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: Bravo! Bravo! Well done boy!

PANEL TWO.

We see Shiazar from over the shoulder, closeup, his face in mid-turn back to the reader.

2. GUILLEMARTZ(DISEMBODIED): The true son of Zoro'niah...

PANEL THREE.

Guillemartz, waist up again, he raises his left fist.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We pan back to Shiazar in the same place as before, but fully rotated to the reader.

3. SHIAZAR: Zoro-what?

PAGE SIXTY-NINE.**PANEL ONE.**

Pan back to Guillemartz, similar to the panel of him on the last page, but his eyes and fist generate a glow similar to those we have seen from Shiazar.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Guillemartz's fist opens and radiates an emission of brightness that shoots a beam of light out towards Shiazar.

1. SFX: ZHERRRRR!

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar stands his ground, the beam hitting him directly in the middle of his forehead.

2. SHIAZAR: AAAGGGHHH!

PANEL FOUR.

We see four men in ornate regal attire in a meeting in a large and technologically sophisticated conference room, obscured by static.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE SEVENTY.

PANEL ONE.

One of the four men turns over his shoulder in a similar manner to Shiazar in the panel from page 66. The man's face is the only one not obscured by static. He looks similar to Shiazar, albeit older and with longer hair and a long full beard.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Back to Shiazar, on his knees now with his hands on his forehead in agony.

1. SHIAZAR: Ughhh...

PANEL THREE.

Pan back to Guillemartz, he pulls out his flask again.

2. GUILLMARTZ: Zoro'niah.

PANEL FOUR.

Guillemartz takes a drink from the flask.

3. SHIAZAR (DISEMBODIED): What was that?

PANEL FIVE.

Guillemartz finishes his pull from the flask, as he observes it with a satisfied look.

4. GUILLEMARTZ: I'm guessing that wasn't as refreshing as this was.

PAGE SEVENTY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We pan back to Shiazar back on his feet, with one hand on his forehead, displaying confusion in his stance and facial expression.

1. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Did your memory produce anything regarding a special heirloom?

PANEL TWO.

We see Shiazar, shoulders up, now with his right hand on the back of his head, as he expresses fatigue and irritation.

2. SHIAZAR: Heirloom? What are you going on about? Why aren't we fighting yet?

PANEL THREE.

We see Guillemartz from the waist up, as he puts his flask in his breast pocket.

3. GUILLEMARTZ: A sword, not just any sword, let's just say it's valued for something more than beheading.

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar regains his upright posture and physical stability. His emotions transition back to anger and he clenches his fists.

4. SHIAZAR: Fuck your questions! Let's end this...

PAGE SEVENTY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

We see a full body image of Shiazar; his eyes glow and as he rushes towards Guillemartz's position, we see the sharpshooter tree in the background.

1. SHIAZAR: RAAAGGHHH!

PANEL TWO.

Pan back to Guillemartz. He holds his hand up again ready to pull off another psionic attack.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: You are going to remember this headache for a long time.

PANEL THREE.

Guillemartz shoots the beam from his hand; we see this from over his shoulder, with Shiazar in the background charging him.

3. SHIAZAR: RAAAGGHHH!

4. SFX: ZEEERRRRR!

5. GUILLEMARTZ: Regrettable...

PANEL FOUR.

The shot zooms on Shiazar, with Guillemartz no longer visible; an interloper tackles Shiazar from the right and pulls him out of harm's way.

6. SFX: WOOSH!

PAGE SEVENTY-THREE.**PANEL ONE.**

The beam hits the tree that was once a sniper instead. It radiates with light.

1. SFX: TWHIP!

PANEL TWO.

The tree erupts in flames.

2. SFX: CRACKLE!

PANEL THREE.

We pan back to Shiazar on one knee and a hand reaching out to help him up.

3. SHIAZAR: I owe you one.

PANEL FOUR.

The shot reveals Pansheer to be the Shiazar's savior. His hand firmly grasps Shiazar's to hoist him up.

4. PANSHEER: We gotta get the fuck out of here, man.

PAGE SEVENTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

Pan back to Guillemartz, from mid knee, who draws his pistol.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: ...Damn it...

PANEL TWO.

We see Guillemartz's hand from a first-person perspective as his hand takes aim with his pistol in the general direction of Shiazar and Pansheer.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: Sometimes traditional methods work best.

We see Guillemartz, chest up, as he fires his handgun.

3. SFX: BANG!

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Pansheer, his face expressing a ghostly and shocked look.

4. SHIAZAR(DISEMBODIED): PANSHEER!

PANEL FOUR.

Pansheer falls into Shiazar, who catches him.

5. SHIAZAR: PANSHEER!

PAGE SEVENTY-FIVE.**PANEL ONE.**

We zoom in on Pansheer, who twitches in Shiazar's arms.

1. SHIAZAR: I'm getting you out of here, I owe you, remember.

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to Guillemartz, his glowing hand reaches out to capitalize on the distraction.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: Time to remember.

PANEL THREE.

We see Pansheer in Shiazar's embrace; he coughs and gurgles blood and points toward the unconscious Juh'rad still in a pile of rubble.

3. SHIAZAR: What is it Pansheer?

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar uses his powers to project a vine that latches onto the box.

4. SFX: WAH-PISH!

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar looks over at Pansheer. He is out cold.

5. SHIAZAR: Pansheer?

PANEL SIX.

We zoom in on the box, which has a highly detailed emblematic crest consisting of an angelic figure with two wings and two talons.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE SEVENTY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We see Guillemartz from a profile view with burning houses and fields in the background; he fires his psionic attack.

1. SFX: ZERRRRRR!

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar does a 180, and blocks the beam with the case.

2. SFX: CRACK-CRUMBLE!

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar's silhouette is visible through the smoke from impact.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The smoke quickly fades, and we see Shiazar still standing in a defensive block with the back of the case still in his grasp. The front of the case now destroyed, revealing its contents, a finely crafted sword, engraved with the same wing-and-talon emblem on the hilt.

PAGE SEVENTY-SEVEN.**PANEL ONE.**

We zoom in on Guillemartz's face, the bill of his cap casting a shadow over his eyes and his mouth widening into a toothy grin.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar removes the sword from its destroyed case, and observes the lack of damage from the attack.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

This shot takes up the entire bottom half of the page and focuses one side of the blade to reveal cryptic hieroglyphs.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE SEVENTY-EIGHT.**PANEL ONE.**

Guillemartz walks towards Shiazar with confident authority. We see him from behind, with Shiazar in the background to the right, still observing the sword.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We see Guillemartz and Shiazar in profile view with only a few feet between them. This panel takes up the entire right side of the page.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: Surrender the sword, and I'll make all this pain go away.

PANEL THREE.

The shot zooms in on the sword, and the hieroglyphs begin to glow.

PAGE SEVENTY-NINE.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar hands the sword to Guillemartz.

1. SHIAZAR: Hope this was all worth it.

PANEL TWO.

Guillemartz smiles as he confiscates the sword and holds it up, examining it.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: This is beyond worth, boy. Far greater than you can imagine.

PANEL THREE.

We see Guillemartz's glee turn sour after further examination of the sword.

3. GUILLEMARTZ: Wait... what th-

PANEL FOUR.

The sword emits the beam it previously absorbed into Guillemartz's face.

4. SFX: ZEERRRR!

PAGE EIGHTY.**PANEL ONE.**

The reflection blasts Guillemartz back several yards. He is airborne and flipped backwards with his legs up in the air and his cap flies off revealing his gray undercut.

1. SFX: POW!

PANEL TWO.

Guillemartz crashes into a picket fence several feet from impact.

2. SFX: BRACK!

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar quickly slides the sword into his belt.

3. SFX: SHINK!

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar turns to Pansheer who is still on the ground.

4. SHIAZAR: PANSHEER!

PAGE EIGHTY-ONE.**PANEL ONE.**

Shiazar quickly rushes over to Pansheer to check on him.

1. SHIAZAR: Let's get out of here, bud.

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar throws Pansheer over his shoulder.

2. PANSHEER: ughhhh...

3. SHIAZAR: Don't worry, I got you.

PANEL THREE.

We see Shiazar carrying Pansheer into the horizon of the burning countryside. The sun is setting, blending the red of the sky with the red of the flames. This panel takes up the bottom third of the page.

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 6

CHARACTERS:**Shiazar****Pansheer****Juh'rad****Guillemartz****SETTING:**

The forest outskirts of Pom'eh. Large oak and cedar trees form a dense canopy with rocky creeks intertwining the woods.

PAGE EIGHTY-TWO.**PANEL ONE.**

We see an overhead view of a burning Pom'eh. It resembles a crater as the main settlements in the basin in the middle of the area emit red flames.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We see Shiazar's eyes close up, with a reflection similar to that of the crater imagery in the previous panel.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We see an image similar to the burning view of the village, but the crater is a bullet wound in the side of an abdomen.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE EIGHTY-THREE.**PANEL ONE.**

The shot zooms out to reveal Shiazar on his knees by an unconscious Pansheer bleeding out.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar extends his arm over Pansheer's wound.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

The shot zooms in on Shiazar, with his eyes glowing.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We pan back to Pansheer's wound, with Shiazar's hand over it.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

We see a closeup of eyes open.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE EIGHTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

The shot zooms from the eyes, revealed to be those of Guillemartz, still wedged between debris and planks of wood. His knees are bent upward, his feet buckled outward, and his left arm lodged on the remaining intact portion of the fence. His right hand pressed against his right temple, where we can see his gray undercut in a floppy mess. He is still dazed.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in closer on Guillemartz, as he begins laughing hysterically.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: HEH-HEH-HEH-AAAAAH!

PANEL THREE.

We pan back to Shiazar's hand, covered in blood.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out back to Shiazar still by Pansheer's side pulling his hand away.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

The shot returns to the where the bullet hole once was, now fully healed, with blood smudged in the shape of Shiazar's hand.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE EIGHTY-FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

The panel focuses on the handprint of smeared blood, which Shiazar begins to wipe off with his other hand.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We shift to another gash being wiped of blood.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

The shot zooms out, revealing Guillemartz on one knee beside Juh'rad, attempting to bring him back to consciousness.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: Your ambitions show more potential than those of an informant.

PANEL FOUR.

The shot focuses on a disheveled Guillemartz standing over a partially obscured Juh'rad.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: With an injury like that, you wouldn't be much of an informant anyway.

PANEL FIVE.

The shot reverses views from over Guillemartz's shoulder looking down on Juh'rad. His body is covered in gashes, and his jaw dislodged from his skull.

PAGE EIGHTY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We pan back to Shiazar and Pansheer. Shiazar cleans his hands off in a nearby creek in the forest, while Pansheer sits up against a tree.

1. PANSHEER: I can't believe this...

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Pansheer, who contemplates and leans on the tree, placing his hands on the sides of his head.

2. PANSHEER: Our families, friends, and neighbors are all dead. Everyone we know... dead.

PANEL THREE.

We shift back to Shiazar facing away from the reader, on his knees by the creek bank, still washing his hands.

3. PANSHEER (DISEMBODIED): You know, your dad told me about that case years ago.

PANEL FOUR.

We see Shiazar's hands submerged in the water with clouds of blood.

4. PANSHEER (DISEMBODIED): He told me, in the event of an emergency, to give it to you.

PANEL FIVE.

We see Shiazar from behind, still on his knees drying his hands off, still facing the opposite of the reader.

5. SHIAZAR: I am not of his blood, may he rest in peace.

PAGE EIGHTY-SEVEN.**PANEL ONE.**

We pan back to Pansheer, who lifts himself up, with an annoyed expression, from the tree trunk.

1. PANSHEER: What the fuck are you talking about?

PANEL TWO.

Pansheer begins to approach Shiazar by the creek.

2. PANSHEER: How much brain damage did you endure from that colonel cunt anyway?

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Shiazar from the shoulders up, his head turned just enough to see the profile of his face.

3. SHIAZAR: He's more of a general cunt.

4. PANSHEER(DISEMBODIED): What?

PANEL FOUR.

The shot zooms back to Pansheer hovering over Shiazar, still facing away on his knees.

5. SHIAZAR: He's a general, not a colonel.

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar gets up and turns to Pansheer as he wipes his hands with a cloth.

6. SHIAZAR: But generally speaking, he is a cunt nonetheless.

PAGE EIGHTY-EIGHT.

PANEL ONE.

We pan back to Pansheer from the mid-torso up, looking perplexed and confused. He is yelling, with his hands above his head with open palms.

1. PANSHEER: Zorraqians slaughtered everyone, my best friend found out he's a wizard, and I died and came back as a fucking clueless zombie.

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to Shiazar in the background, with Pansheer in the foreground with just the back of his head and shoulders visible. He puts his hand on Pansheer's shoulder.

2. SHIAZAR: You didn't die, but if we waste anymore time here...

PANEL THREE.

We zoom out a profile view of both Shiazar and Pansheer. Shiazar's hand still rests on Pansheer's shoulder, on the side visible to the reader. We see them both waist up.

3. SHIAZAR: ...death will find us.

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar turns and walks away. Pansheer displays an unsatisfied look.

4. PANSHEER: So, who is your real father then? And what was in that case?

PANEL FIVE.

The shot focuses on Shiazar from his knees up, facing away from the reader with his hands on his hips as he looks up at the canopy of the forest.

5. SHIAZAR: I don't know... but I saw him.

PANEL SIX.

We zoom in on Shiazar's waist, as his hand reaches for the sword tucked under his robe and tunic on his belt to unsheathe it.

6. SHIAZAR: And as for the content of the case...

PAGE EIGHTY-NINE.**PANEL ONE.**

We see a full body shot of Shiazar, he holds the sword upright in his left hand, which is nearly perpendicular with his head, his face slightly turns to it. The sword's hieroglyphs glow.

1. SHIAZAR: ...a clue for our inquiries.

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 7

CHARACTERS:

Shinara- A local legend, rumored to be a witch, an elderly woman who hasn't been seen by anyone in the area for over a decade.

Destraux- A Zorraqian enforcer; he is as mute as he is massive, standing at seven feet tall.

Zorhawk- The Zorraqian supreme leader; although his title is Emperor, the majority of those under his rule refer to him as their father or as their god.

SETTING:

The forests surrounding Pom'eh.

Shinara's home, a cave modified into a hideout. The rocky interior is adorned with timber beams and pillars, and animal hides make up the drapes and rugs. Knickknacks and heirlooms of fantastical and advanced origins contrast to the primitive nature of the residence.

The military headquarters of Zorraqia's Comosian operation, right outside the city limits of the Comosian capital, Erothi.

Zorhawk's office in his palace in the capital, Kharzkova, on planet Zorraqia.

PAGE NINETY.

PANEL ONE.

We see an ornate office with a large ascending staircase in the foyer with ebony railings and black marble steps that serves as the focal point of the panel, with the elevated executive section of the office obscured by distance and angle from a point-perspective view. This takes up the entire top half of the page.

1. SFX: RING-RING! ...RING-RING!

PANEL TWO.

This panel takes up the bottom half of the page, revealing the backside view of the room. We see a large wooden desk of polished purple heart, adorned with subtle platinum trimming, the middle portion is obscured by a large chair of violet tinted-velvet and matching trim to the desk. The reader cannot see anyone in the chair, but we see smoke rising from the opposing side of the chair and a metallic and ebony bell phone ringing on the right side of the desk.

2. SFX: RING-RING!RING-RING!

PAGE NINETY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom in further and see a hand that reaches out from the right side of the chair towards the phone. The hand shows signs of hard labor, wrinkles, and liver spots, yet the sleeve encompassing the arm and wrist looks to be that of a sleek black regal military attire, with silver-lined trim by the cuff links. This panel takes up the top half of the page

1. SFX: RING-RING! ...RING-RI-
2. SFX: CLICK!

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to Guillemartz. He uses a wireless headset radio transceiver and stands by a helicopter. The helicopter has a similar aesthetic design to the APC we saw earlier. Its rotary actively spins.

3. SFX: VOOF! VOOF! VOOF!
4. GUILLEMARTZ: I've located the device and the boy.

PANEL THREE.

We pan back to the office, zooming in on the left-hand on the desk holding a wooden pipe from the bottom, which emits smoke. The smoker is still not revealed fully.

5. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): However, the operation's success has been delayed by misfortune.

PAGE NINETY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

We pan back to Guillemartz outside the helicopter. Two Zorraqian medics are loading a cot with an unconscious Juh'rad on board in the background.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: He can't be more than a few miles away. I've already called for an entire battalion to comb the forest.

PANEL TWO.

We see the right hand holding the phone up to the ear of the listener, the hair around the ear is more salt than pepper and appears to be a faded haircut from what we can see, revealing only the bottom half of the man's face. We see a wrinkled dimple, a long chin, and a rectangular thick black moustache covering the top lip.

2. GUILLEMARTZ(DISEMBODIED): I assure you, the results will be to your liking.

3. ZORHAWK: No need for assurance, I have already sent mine.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Zorhawk's right hand gently placing the phone back on the receiver.

4. SFX: CLICK!

PANEL FOUR.

We pan back to Guillemartz. He expresses anxiety while the helicopter ascends with Juh'rad in the background.

PAGE NINETY-THREE.

PANEL ONE.

We return to Shiazar and Pansheer walking through the forest at a diagonal angle from a bird's eye view in the overarching canopy of branches and leaves. This takes up the top half of the page.

1. PANSHEER: You really have too much faith in that sword.
2. SHIAZAR: What are you going on about?

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Pansheer from the knees up. He's walking next to Shiazar, his face turned to Pansheer, ready to hear him out.

3. PANSHEER: I mean, do you even know what those glowing symbols mean?

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to Shiazar, who stops in his tracks. Pansheer unknowingly strolls onward, talking aloud.

4. PANSHEER: And for that matter, where the fuck are we going?

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to Shiazar's left hand on the hilt of the sword in the process of unsheathing it. The glow radiates from the few inches of blade that are exposed.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE NINETY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

The panel zooms back from Shiazar. We see him from the knees up, with the sword fully unsheathed and in full glow. Shiazar holds the blade horizontally, perpendicular to his shoulders, and inspects it.

1. SHIAZAR: ...West...

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to Pansheer a few meters ahead in the path, who stops in his tracks with his head turned to a profile view in acknowledgement.

2. PANSHEER: Did you say something?

PANEL THREE.

We return to Shiazar. He points the sword westward in a similar motion to a teacher with a pointing stick at a chalkboard.

3. SHIAZAR: West. We go west.

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in on the sword, still glowing, the hieroglyphs now morphed into what appears to be a compass across the middle of the blade.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

We go back to Pansheer from the waist up, whose face shows astonishment.

4. PANSHEER: Uhhh... alright then.

PAGE NINETY-FIVE.**PANEL ONE.**

We return to Guillemartz, full body view, as he pats his jacket clear of dust and dirt from his conflict with Shiazar earlier. We see a handful of soldiers in the background.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: Well men...

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Guillemartz, mid-chest up, as he adjusts his collar and lapels.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: ...brace yourselves...

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Guillemartz a little closer from the neck up, as he puts his cap back on.

3. GUILLEMARTZ: ...he's here.

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to the men in the background. Unlike the assault team from earlier, they lack face masks and have lighter armor. They express a sense of weariness and fear. A towering shadow lightly shades the men in the middle of the panel, with the left and right still exposed to sunlight.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE NINETY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We pan to a set of two large, heavy boots with metallic trim from behind; the space between them reveals a point-perspective image with the soldiers at the point in the distance standing in shock.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to Guillemartz. He takes a heavy pull from his flask.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We return to a mysterious figure we can only see from the knees down. One leg out in front of the other as the man walks forward. The black pants are tucked into the knee-high boots with a red stripe down the outer sides of each leg. We also catch a glimpse of an overcoat right above the knees.

1. SFX: CLOP!

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out further from behind the man to reveal six metal tubes attached to mechanical devices protruding from his backside through his coat. His shoulder pads shine with a blade on each point facing outward on all sides like small scythes. His arms are covered in black leather sleeves, tucked into elbow-length matching gloves. His left arm has an armband with the Zorraqian insignia. The tubes arch over his shoulder blades into the back of his head, which is covered with a leather drape on each ear and the neck. The top of his head adorned with a crown of protruding thorns that implode inward. The source of the shadow reveals itself to be a black smog emanating from the tubes behind him, leaving a trail in his wake.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE NINETY-SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We return to Shiazar and Pansheer. They both look up to stare at the reader. Shiazar holds the glowing sword outward.

1. SHIAZAR: The compass is fixated on this structure.
2. PANSHEER: So, this is its intended destination then?

PANEL TWO.

In full view from behind, the two gaze at the structure that stands before them a chiseled cliff-side entrance to a man made cave covered in vines, with shrubbery and trees growing along the base and top.

3. SHIAZAR: That is what the sword seems to be suggesting. Ready?
4. PANSHEER: Uhhh... you go first.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Shiazar from the waist up. He expresses a smirk and takes cocky posture, holding the sword in full glow upright slightly tilted at an angle. The compass arrow gives off a separate and more potent glow.

5. SHIAZAR: Fair enough, I'm the one with a god damned glowing sword.

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar and Pansheer walk into the shade-obscured entrance. Shiazar holds the sword out in front upright, using the glow as a source of light like a torch. Pansheer cautiously retracts his neck and shoulders behind him to his side.

6. PANSHEER: We really should have spent less time drinking wine and more time listening to old people stories.
7. SHIAZAR: You mean folklore?
8. PANSHEER: Shut up.

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 8

CHARACTERS:

Shinara- A local legend, rumored to be a witch, an elderly woman who hasn't been seen by anyone in the area for over a decade.

SETTING:

Shinara's home, a cave modified into a hideout. The rocky interior is adorned with timber beams and pillars, and animal hides make up the drapes and rugs. Knickknacks and heirlooms of fantastical and advanced origins contrast to the primitive nature of the residence.

PAGE NINETY-EIGHT.**PANEL ONE.**

We see Shiazar and Pansheer in full, from a frontal view. They are several yards within the cave entrance, with the light from the entrance illuminating their backsides, with only the sword providing light, similar to a lantern, in the front. The cave is revealed to be more of a catacomb than a natural structure, with wooden beams holding the ceiling above, stone pillars holding up the sides of the wall, and engravings of text and imagery adorned alongside the walls. This panel takes up the entire page.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE NINETY-NINE.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom on Shiazar. He holds the sword above his head like an overhead light, as he inspects the inscriptions on the wall before him.

1. SHIAZAR: Hmmm...

PANEL TWO.

We shift to Shiazar's perspective, with his sword held out near the top of the panel, lighting up the source of his interest. A crudely carved image depicts four men holding their swords up with trails of light connecting each one to an egg-shaped object above them. The images are accompanied by hieroglyphs similar to the sword's that form a vertical line between the men and the egg.

2. PANSHEER: What?

3. SHIAZAR: Wait a second...

PANEL THREE.

We pan back to a frontal view of Shiazar, who holds the sword up closer to the wall.

4. SHIAZAR: Of course!

PANEL FOUR.

Back to Shiazar's perspective. He holds the sword perpendicular to the symbols that match the ones on the blade. Both sets of hieroglyphs begin glowing in the process.

5. PANSHEER(DISEMBODIED): What is it?

6. SHIAZAR: Just a realization...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED.**PANEL ONE.**

We zoom in on Pansheer, whose face expresses skepticism.

1. PANSHEER: Care to elaborate on your vague statement?

PANEL TWO.

We see the engraved stone engraved panel slide open revealing a keyhole.

2. SHIAZAR(DISEMBODIED): That I am...

PANEL THREE.

We zoom on Shiazar waist up, he holds the sword up with one hand as he inspects it with a smug grin.

3. SHIAZAR: ...destined to be...

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar inserts the sword into the slot.

4. SHIAZAR: ... an archeologist.

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom in on Pansheer. His eyes roll and he puts his hand on his forehead.

5. PANSHEER: You're only destiny is idiocy.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND ONE.

PANEL ONE.

The keyhole rotates, and mechanisms around the wall begin to retract the wall from previously obscured hinges.

1. SFX: CRUK-CRUK-CRUK-CRUK!

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to facing Shiazar at a front angle, with Pansheer looking from behind, over his shoulder, in excitement. Shiazar removes the sword from the slot.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

The hidden doorway opens midway to reveal a vault-like cache of technology reminiscent of the design featured on Shiazar's sword. We see weapons racks with advanced weaponry, holographic projections of maps and planets, and an oval metallic device that rests on a pedestal in the middle of the room. This panel takes up half of the page but is centered in the middle between the first two and last two panels of the page.

2. SHIAZAR & PANSHEER(DISEMBODIED): WHOA!

PANEL FOUR.

We see Shiazar and Pansheer from behind as they walk through the opened door into the room.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

Pansheer grabs a scythe-like weapon from the rack and inspects it. Shiazar's eyes fixate on something not in panel.

3. PANSHEER: Well at least we found some cool shit. What's next on the agenda?

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWO.

PANEL ONE.

We see Shiazar from behind, he approaches the metallic oval in a one-point perspective. This panel takes up the top half of the page.

1. PANSHEER(DISEMBODIED): Shiazar?

PANEL TWO.

We see a frontal view of Shiazar in a hypnotic daze; he ignores Pansheer and continues forward towards the metallic object. He holds his sword outward from chest height, and it glows and reacts to the proximity of the object.

2. SHIAZAR: Zhel...shera...

PANEL THREE.

We pan back to Pansheer with the newly acquired weapon, as his attention shifts with concern to Shiazar.

3. PANSHEER: Hey! What's going on with you? You alright?

PANEL FOUR.

We return to Shiazar, still in his hypnotic gaze and only a foot from the metallic egg.

4. SHIAZAR: Yes... of course.

5. PANSHEER(DISEMBODIED): Shiazar! Wait!

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom in closer on Shiazar, who reaches out towards the object with his free hand.

6. SHIAZAR: I hear you but...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THREE.

PANEL ONE.

The shot zooms in on Shiazar's eyes. They are reflecting something that is not physically in front of him: an adult woman in a fetal position. She is naked, and her long platinum hair drapes over her body like a dress, with only the sides of her legs, thighs, and arms revealed.

1. SHIAZAR: ...can you hear me?

PANEL TWO.

We return to Pansheer from a frontal view, with Shiazar's shadow from the source of light in the background. He dashes towards Shiazar with a panicked expression. We cannot see Shiazar or the other side of the room, but a humanoid silhouette partially casts a shadow over Pansheer, next to Shiazar's.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We return to Shiazar's hand reaching out to touch the object only an inch away.

2. SHIAZAR: ...you can...

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom further to Shiazar's hand grasping half of the surface area of the orb.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom out to Shiazar's sword. It clashes with a spear that looks similar in its origin and design.

3. SFX: KASHING!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom out from the previous image. Shiazar holds his sword above his head, and his other hand still hovers over the object without touching it. The source of the spear attack reveals itself to be a short-statured person dressed in robes and rags, leathery light armor encasing the outer limbs, and a hood that hides the face.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We return focus to Pansheer from his backside, as he attempts to intercept the mysterious figure from behind with a swing of the scythe.

1. SFX: WHISH!

PANEL THREE.

The hooded figure quickly lifts the opposing end of the spear, which is a double-sided pike, to intercept the scythe.

2. SFX: CLANK!

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to Shiazar. The spear end lowers towards his neck as it compensates for the movement necessary to defend from Pansheer's attack. He still holds his sword over himself as he expresses shock.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

Shiazar swings the sword downward to sever the spear.

1. SFX: SWOOSH!

PANEL TWO.

We zoom out from the fight, and the hooded figure flips the locked scythe out from Pansheer's grasp, and Shiazar's sword misses the spear as the slack of the movement rotates the spear's side away.

2. SFX: CLUNK!

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Pansheer as he holds his wrist, with his opposing hand in pain.

3. PANSHEER: Shit.

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom back out, and the hooded figure spins the spear with the same momentum as in the previous counterattack. The pike side comes down on Shiazar's sword from above. His sword, still facing downward from his swing, collides with the pike.

4. SFX: CLANG!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom in on the pike. It displaces Shiazar's sword in the process.

1. SFX: CLANK!

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Shiazar from the waist up. He expresses pain after being disarmed and holds his wrist with pain.

2. SHIAZAR: Fuck.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom back out to the same distance from the fight panels to showcase the defeat the two friends have met with. Both Shiazar and Pansheer submit with their hands held up, and the hooded figure retains a defensive stance with the hybridized weapon.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in Shiazar from the waist up. He retains his submissive gesture of surrender, yet his facial expression suggests a coy smirk.

3. SHIAZAR: Alright lady... you win.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We shift focus back to the hooded figure, who lets her guard down and lowers the weapon to her side.

1. SHINARA: What business do you two have here?

PANEL TWO.

We return to Shiazar, still maintaining his gesture and smirk.

2. SHIAZAR: Well... it's kind of a long story.

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to Pansheer from the waist up, his hands still held up. Unlike Shiazar, he expresses a nervous and more sincere demeanor.

3. PANSHEER: The sword told us to do it!

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom back out to see the hooded figure spin the spear backwards, and smack the shaft on top of Pansheer's shoulder.

4.SFX: THWACK!

5. PANSHEER: OW!

PANEL FIVE.

We return to Shiazar. He struggles not to laugh.

6. SHIAZAR: What he meant to say, is that the sword led us here.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHT.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom back out to the hooded figure spinning the spear to hit Shiazar on the shoulder with the shaft.

1. SFX: FWISH!

PANEL TWO.

We shift focus back to Shiazar. He catches the shaft of the spear before impact.

2. SHIAZAR: Listen lady we-

PANEL THREE.

The hooded figure uses her two-handed grip on the spear to force it to the side in Shiazar's grasp, which causes gripping knuckles to hit him on the side of the head, essentially punching himself.

3. SHIAZAR: OW!

PANEL FOUR.

We return to the hooded figure with the spear relaxed at her side.

4. SHINARA: Well, whatever the reason for your being here, you boys are too stupid to be a real threat.

PANEL FIVE.

We see the hooded figure. She removes the hood in a closeup. We see an elderly woman covered with a raggedy scarf that wraps around her head, with stray patches of tangled long white hair coming from the seams. The cloth wraps around her neck and tucks under her robes, and she has a woven cloth patch over her right eye.

5. SHINARA: I'd appreciate it if you two addressed me as Shinara from now on, to avoid future injuries. We can get better acquainted in my living quarters over some tea.

PANEL SIX.

We pan back to Shiazar and Pansheer. They stand alongside each other with their hands on their bruises.

6. SHIAZAR: Tea sounds great.

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 9

CHARACTERS:

Shinara- A local legend, rumored to be a witch, an elderly woman who hasn't been seen by anyone in the area for over a decade.

Destraux- A Zorraqian enforcer, as mute as he is massive, standing at seven feet tall.

Zorhawk- The Zorraqian supreme leader; although his title is Emperor, the majority of those under his rule refer to him as their father or as their god.

SETTING:

Shinara's home, a cave modified into a hideout. The rocky interior adorned with timber beams and pillars, and animal hides making up the drapes and rugs. Knickknacks and heirlooms of fantastical and advanced origins contrast to the primitive nature of the residence.

The military headquarters of Zorraqia's Comosian operation, right outside the city limits of the Comosian capital, Erothi.

Zorhawk's office in his palace in the capital, Kharzkova, on planet Zorraqia.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINE.**PANEL ONE.**

We see a diagonal overhead view of Shiazar, Pansheer, and Shinara all sitting, their legs crossed, on mats in a living room. The room resembles the architectural design of the more primitive entrance room they found in the cave entrance. There is a small coffee table that only rises six inches from the ground. There are large rugs scattered across the stone flooring, and homemade decorations made from wood line the walls, with tapestries in place of paintings or portraits in between. Shelves and book-cases litter one side of the room, while a large oak table, covered with bowls, candlesticks, and scattered scrolls, occupies the other side. This panel takes up the entire page.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TEN.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom in on the trio at eye level, as all three look uncertain and uncomfortable. A distracted Shiazar examines the room around him and twiddles his thumbs, a pitiful Pansheer crosses his arm across to his opposing shoulder since he does not heal at Shiazar's rate, and a serious Shinara examines them with uncertainty and bafflement.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar observes something that he recognizes that is not in view of the reader.

1. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): So, are you going to introduce yourselves?

PANEL THREE.

We see from Shiazar's perspective. His fixation revealed to be a painting of a younger Shinara with a bearded man who looks similar to the man he saw in his vision from Guillemartz.

2 SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): ...or just be rude?

PANEL FOUR.

We pan back to a distance, to show all three of the characters at the table. Shiazar quickly turns his head towards Shinara to address her. Pansheer shifts his focus towards her as well.

3. SHIAZAR: Oh sorry, I just was admiring your taste in decor. I am Shiazar, and this is-

4. PANSHEER: Pansheer's the name, it's been a pleasure.

PANEL FIVE.

We shift focus to Shinara from the shoulders up. Her face expresses an uncertainty.

5. SHINARA: The sword, where did you find it? Who gave it to you?

PANEL SIX.

We pan back to Shiazar with a perplexed reaction.

6. SHIAZAR: Well, I got it from my father's house in Pom'eh.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND ELEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom back out with the trio at the table, Shiazar and Shinara lock eyes with a serious mutual inquiry. Pansheer sits idle with an uncomfortable posture.

1. SHINARA: I assume you have already figured out he wasn't your real father.

PANEL TWO.

We shift focus to Shiazar from the shoulders up.

2. SHIAZAR: Well yes... I did. But he's still the one who raised me as his son.

PANEL THREE.

We return focus to Shinara, staring emotionlessly.

3. SHINARA: That man was your father's friend and your mother's brother. He was your uncle and a loyalist to your real father's cause.

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom back out of the room to show the three characters. Shiazar expresses shock, Pansheer expresses confusion, and Shinara has a blunt poker face.

4. SHIAZAR: That painting behind you...

PANEL FIVE.

We pan back to Shinara from mid-chest up, the painting in the background obscured only to a minimum extent by her.

5. SHINARA: Yes, that is your father and I.

PANEL SIX.

We zoom back out to show the three characters again at the table. Shiazar rubs his forehead, Shinara stares plainly, and Pansheer scratches his head.

6. SHIAZAR: Then are you-

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWELVE.

PANEL ONE.

We shift focus back to Shinara's face. She breaks her poker face and looks down with shame.

1. SHINARA: No. I am not your mother.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom back out to Shiazar and Pansheer. Both look at each other in confusion. Shinara stands up.

2. SFX: DING!

3. SHINARA: Do you like sugar in your tea?

PANEL THREE.

We pan back to Shiazar and Pansheer from Shinara's perspective. They both awkwardly nod in affirmation.

4. SHIAZAR: Yes, please.

5. PANSHEER: Yes, please.

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to Shinara as she turns to go to the kitchen in the adjacent room.

6. SHINARA: So, tell me then...

PANEL FIVE.

We shift focus to Shinara's perspective. We see her hand as she pulls the steaming teapot off the stove. There is a timer on the counter next to it.

7. SHINARA: How do you intend on fighting off an entire Zorraqian battalion if you couldn't best an old witch, or lady, as you referred to me?

PANEL SIX.

We return to Shiazar and Pansheer, who turn to each other with stupefied expressions.

8. SHIAZAR: Uhhh...

9. PANSHEER: Ummm...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN.

PANEL ONE.

We pan back to Shinara's hand. She pours tea into one of the three tea cups on a bronze tray.

1. SHINARA: I know you have potential beyond what you displayed earlier.

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to Shiazar from the waist up. He rubs his chin and tries to think of an answer.

2. SHIAZAR: Well-

3. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): I know it's not all about swords and guns, I mean your other abilities.

PANEL THREE.

We return to Shinara's hand. It pours a second cup full.

4. SHINARA: I think we both know, even with that advantage, that it's not enough.

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to Pansheer from mid-chest up. His face expresses impatience.

5. PANSHEER: Listen lady, he took out dozens of guys back at the village!

PANEL FIVE.

We see Shinara's hand. It pours the third teacup full.

6. SHINARA: A few dozen infantrymen... mere pawns for child's play.

PANEL SIX.

We pan back to Pansheer, who stands up in anger. He points his finger at Shinara through the doorway, which we cannot see.

7. PANSHEER: Quit wasting our time and give us answers!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN.

PANEL ONE.

We see through Shinara's perspective. She lifts the tray off the counter with all three cups and a small tin of sugar with a spoon.

1. SHINARA: I will tell you all I know, however...

PANEL TWO.

We see the living room in full view, again, with all three of the characters. Shinara walks out of the kitchen doorway with the tray of teacups. Pansheer still stands and Shiazar attempts to rise to accept the tea.

2. SHINARA: ...you forgot my one simple request.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Shinara from the waist up. She shows off her metal manipulation powers to lift the spoon off the tray.

3. SHIAZAR (DISEMBODIED): Wait, what?

PANEL FOUR.

We see the spoon levitate over the sugar tin.

4. PANSHEER (DISEMBODIED): Oh, c'mon!

PANEL FIVE.

The spoon scoops up the sugar and lifts up.

5. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): ...to address me by name.

PANEL SIX.

We see the spoon dump sugar into one of the cups.

6. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): Respect is key in what I am about to teach you.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN.

PANEL ONE.

We see the spoon stir the sugar effortlessly in the cup.

1. SHIAZAR: Teach us?
2. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): Think of it as rigorous training for the hard life ahead.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom out to see the trio on their feet. Shinara hands the cup to Shiazar, who graciously accepts it.

3. SHINARA: A tadpole needs to adapt before it can breathe sweetness in the air.

PANEL THREE.

We pan back to Pansheer from the waist up. He expresses puzzlement.

4. PANSHEER: What's that supposed to mean?

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus back on Shinara. She levitates the spoon again over the tray.

5. SHINARA: If you take time to listen, you might learn.

PANEL FIVE.

Shinara then uses her metal manipulation to mold the spoon into a small sphere.

6. SHINARA: Yet, here you are, a bitter cup of tea to match your taste for life.

PANEL SIX.

We pan back to Pansheer from the shoulders up. He expresses a sarcastic glare.

7. PANSHEER: Oh no, no sugar for me?

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN.

PANEL ONE.

We see the metal orb hover over Shinara's finger in a closeup.

1. SHINARA: Punishment doesn't entail the deprivation of luxury.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom out to the living room with the trio. Shinara flicks her finger and launches the orb of metal at Pansheer's stomach. Shiazar flinches and spills some of his tea in the process. Pansheer bends forward in pain in reaction to the impact.

2. SFX: WHOOSH!

3. PANSHEER: OOF!

4. SHIAZAR: Shit!

PANEL THREE.

We remain in the same view, Pansheer is now on his knees, catching his breath. Shiazar cautiously takes a sip from his tea, and Shinara sets the tray on the table.

5. PANSHEER: GASP!

6. SHINARA: Hard to breathe the air when you are still a tadpole isn't it?

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom back on Shinara. She takes a seat after setting the tray down.

7. SHINARA: Like sugar, time is a luxury we do not have.

PANEL FIVE.

We see the tray from Shinara's perspective. His hand reaches out to grab her teacup.

8. SHINARA: They will be here in a matter of days...

PANEL SIX.

We shift back to Shinara's face, she takes a sip from her cup.

9. SHINARA: We start your training after tea.

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 10

CHARACTERS:**Shiazar****Shinara****Guillemartz****Destraux**- The large enforcer Zorhawk sent to Guillemartz's aid.**Zhelshera**- An enigmatic telepathic entity that has the appearance of a woman.**SETTING:**

Shinara's training room, a large dome that lies deep underground within her lair.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN.

PANEL ONE.

We see Guillemartz from his backside. He holds his hands together to rest behind his back. He overlooks commotion that the reader can only partially see due to his obstruction in the middle of the panel.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: Zorhawk has a strong sense of reassurance...

PANEL TWO.

We zoom over Guillemartz's shoulder. We can see the side of his profile, and the source of the commotion ahead of him. A large rectangular formation of soldiers is divided into different classes and specialist roles. There are officers at the head of the varied divisions of infantry and specialists. They shout orders and inspect their units. This panel takes up the majority of the page, with the previous one in the top left corner.

2. ZORRAQIAN OFFICER: READY ARMS FOR INSPECTION!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN.

PANEL ONE.

We return to Guillemartz. We see him from his shoulders up. He turns to his right to address someone the reader cannot see.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: Wouldn't you agree?

PANEL TWO.

We zoom out of the shot to reveal Destraux, the large man Zorhawk sent to aid Guillemartz. He stands a couple feet from Guillemartz and remains fixated on the army ahead of him, and the reader only sees their backsides, with the exception of Guillemartz's facial profile that awaits confirmation from Destraux.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Destraux's mid-chest, with his arms crossed over his fusion of mechanical implants and military trench coat.

2. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Of course, you agree, it's all you are capable of.

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in Destraux's eyes. They emit a radiant glow of fluorescent white light under the metallic visor that casts a shadow over the upper portion of his face.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETEEN.**PANEL ONE.**

We see a pair of glowing eyes close up. They emit a natural soft yellow glow.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We zoom out to reveal Shiazar in full view, as he parries an attack with his sword.

1. SFX: CLANG!

PANEL THREE.

We zoom out further to reveal a large round room. The walls are metallic and akin in design to the vault room seen earlier. There are elevated platforms and rail-like obstacles scattered around the area. Shiazar and Shinara are engaged in a training session, their blades still in contact.

2. SHINARA: Good...

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in on Shinara's face. It expresses skepticism.

3. SHINARA: ...but not good enough.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY.**PANEL ONE.**

We zoom out to show Shiazar and Shinara in full-body view. Shinara stretches her free hand downward toward Shiazar's feet. His side of the platform vibrates.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Shiazar's face. It expresses confusion.

1. SHIAZAR: Huh?

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Shiazar's legs from the knee down. They wobble in liquefied metal.

2. SHIAZAR: SHIT!

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom back out to reveal Shiazar waist deep in the liquid metal. He holds his sword frantically in mid-parry, Shinara's spear presses downward on his sword to sink him deeper.

3. SHIZAR: ALRIGHT! ALRIGHT!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We see Shinara refrain from further pressure as she pulls her weapon away. We see Shiazar submerged in the muck. His head and hands down to his elbows are all that remain visible. He holds his sword arched above him in an act of submission.

1. SHIAZAR: I concede.

PANEL TWO.

Shinara turns her back on Shiazar and lifts her free hand in a careless waiver of disapproval. The liquefied metal dissipates into beads, causing Shiazar to fall.

2. SHINARA: How disappointing...

3. SHIAZAR: WAIT!

PANEL THREE.

We see Shiazar fall down in darkness. The metallic beads linger in the distance and reflect light, simulating stars in space.

PANEL FOUR.

We see from Shiazar's perspective following his fall. His free hand reaches out towards the platform futilely. The border of the panel emits brightness that expands inward.

4. UNKNOWN (DISEMBODIED): Utilize what you unlocked earlier...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

We see a flashback of Shiazar's hand touching the metallic egg-shaped device seen earlier.

1. UNKNOWN (DISEMBODIED): The second you touched it...

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar sees a woman in his vision, the same one he saw before, naked and entombed in a crystallized egg in a fetal position.

2. UNKNOWN: You realize your potential. You realize your humanity.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on the woman. Her head turns to the reader.

3. UNKNOWN: All the data is there. The past... the present... and the future.

PANEL FOUR.

We see the crystal egg shatter, illuminating the area around it.

4. UNKNOWN: Can you feel it?

5. SHIAZAR: Yes.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THREE AND PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We see a splash panel that takes up both pages entirely. We see the shattered egg in the middle of the two pages, and it emits beams of light in all directions. There are visions of past, present, and future events on several of the beams. On one we can see the four men from Shiazar's vision earlier holding their four swords in unison. One we see a young woman crying in an escape pod. One shows a large ship approaching a planet that looks like Earth. One shows an army walking through a portal. One shows a woman carrying two babies. One shows people being created in a lab. One shows a girl opening the egg chamber. Finally one that shows a world engulfed in flames.

1. SHIAZAR: Who are you?
2. UNKNOWN: I am Zhelshera.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

We pan back to Shiazar, still in mid-air, with beads of liquid metal surrounding him.

1. ZHELSSHERA (DISEMBODIED): If everyone gave up after falling, what would there be left to stand for?

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar forms a fist with his free hand, and his eyes begin to glow.

2 ZHELSSHERA (DISEMBODIED): Apply... yourself.

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar pulls his fist back and closes his eyes.

3. SHIAZAR: AARGH!

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out from Shiazar to reveal he has molded the beads of liquid back into a solid platform upon which he stands.

3. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): Good...

PANEL FIVE.

We pan to Shinara. Pansheer stands next to her holding the tea tray with the pot and cups from earlier.

4. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): Now we can start the next lesson.

PANEL SIX.

Pansheer pours her a cup and smiles at Shinara, who shakes her head.

[NO DIALOGUE]

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 11

CHARACTERS:

Destraux

Prince Lazul- The crown prince of Co'mosiah. A puppet monarch for the Zorraqian Empire.

SETTING:

Zorraqian Erothi HQ, the military base of operations that sources all resources and personnel for the Zorraqian forces. The structure's placement is only a mile outside the city walls, in the hills. It is built of metal and concrete. The design reflects a more modern aesthetic to the more traditional architecture of Erothi.

The White Palace, the regal residence of the Co'mosian royal family. A large palace with minarets and spires, constructed of white stone and marble.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We see the Zorraqian army split its divisions in combined effort, advancing towards the forests outlying Pom'eh.

1. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Locating the boy shouldn't take up more than a couple days...

PANEL TWO.

We pan to a full view of Guillemartz and Destraux. They stand side by side and overlook the operation. Guillemartz holds out an open palm to gesture orders, while Destraux leaves his arms crossed. This is the first time we get a full front side view of Destraux, revealing his massive stature and artificial, cybernetic appearance. His glowing eyes are artificial lenses that are part of his face mask. The lower half of his face consists of a large throat guard plate that rises past where his nose would be. The tubes that connect to the back of his helmet pump an unknown substance into his body. His thorny crown that connects his visor and helmet encircles the source of the shadowy emissions from the top of his head, like a smokestack.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: You will spearhead the vanguard attack in the middle; that way you can respond quickly to any findings on our flanks.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom to focus solely on Destraux. He remains still with arms crossed. We see him from his waist up, with his smog in the background.

1. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Remember the consequences for failure, Destraux...

PANEL TWO.

We shift back to Guillemartz. He twists off the top of his flask.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: You haven't succeeded at every assigned mission these past several years without reason...

PANEL THREE.

We shift to a profile view of Guillemartz. He takes a drink from the flask, with Destraux's profile, two heads taller, behind him.

3. SFX: BWEEEP!

PANEL FOUR.

Guillemartz suddenly turns his head back from his flask to look over his shoulder.

4. GUILLEMARTZ: Huh?!

PANEL FIVE.

We shift focus back to the temporary base of operations the Zorraqians have set up. There is an outdoor radio communication outpost in the middle of the panel. It is the source of the noise that catches Guillemartz's attention. Two operators sit at a table with gadgets and microphones and wave their hands.

5. SFX: BWEEEP! BWEEEP!

6. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Shit, what now?

PANEL SIX.

We zoom out to an overhead view. Guillemartz jogs over to the radio station. We can see Destraux standing in the same place, and the two radio operators at the table.

7. ZORRAQIAN RADIO OPERATOR: Sir! It's an emergency!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHT.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom back in on Guillemartz at the radio station. He stands in front of the two operators, who are in the foreground facing away from the reader.

1. GUILLMARTZ: What's the situation?
2. ZORRAQIAN RADIO OPERATOR: It's planetary HQ in Erothi, there's been an attack.

PANEL TWO.

We go to a profile view of Guillemartz. He yanks the radio receiver from the operator's hands.

3. GUILLEMARTZ: Give me that!

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Guillemartz from the shoulders up, and he holds the receiver up to his ear.

4. GUILLEMARTZ: General Guillemartz speaking, what is your status?

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to a large communication room in a military base. There are several Zorraqian operators, officers, and soldiers in the room. In the middle of the room we see the officer on the other end of the call.

5. ZORRAQIAN OFFICER: Terrorists have detonated explosives within our facility and our installations across Erothi.

PANEL FIVE.

We pan back to Guillemartz's face, with the receiver pressed against the side of his head. He begins to sweat.

6. ZORRAQIAN OFFICER (DISEMBODIED): The insurgency has generated citywide riots and rebellion against our forces...
7. GUILLEMARTZ: I see... any idea on who might be behind these attacks?

PANEL SIX.

We pan back to the Zorraqian officer. We see him from behind as he types with his free hand on a keyboard. There is a monitor in front of him with a picture of a woman's face on it. But it is too blurry to make out fully.

8. ZORRAQIAN OFFICER: We might have a lead on the culprit, female, dark hair...-

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINE.

PANEL ONE.

An explosion goes off in the front of the communications room at Erothi HQ. We see the entire front side of the room erupt in flames.

1. SFX: BOOM!

PANEL TWO.

We zoom outside of the military HQ. The communications room is revealed to be a tower with a visor of glass windows around it. One entire side is destroyed and aflame.

2. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): What was that?!

PANEL THREE.

We return to the officer's desk, covered in debris and flames. A charred corpse of what remains of the officer sits in the chair with the receiver still in hand. The computer monitor still retains the same image of the woman. Her face is distorted with static interference on the screen.

3. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): COLONEL, DO YOU COPY?!

PANEL FOUR.

We return to Guillemartz at the radio station; he points at the operators.

4. GUILLEMARTZ: Put me in contact with Prince Lazul immediately!

PANEL FIVE.

We focus back on Guillemartz, who holds the receiver up to the side of his head to speak into it.

5. GUILLEMARTZ: Guillemartz here, we have a problem.

PANEL SIX.

We shift the person on the other end of the call. All we can see is his hand holding the phone up to his ear.

6. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): I am heading to your palace, Prince, your regal status is at stake.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTY.

PANEL ONE.

The hand of the unseen prince slams the phone down onto the receiver.

1. SFX: CLAMP!

PANEL TWO.

We return to Guillemartz. He turns around to address Destraux, with the radio still in hand.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: Destraux! Carry on with the plan in my absence.

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to Destraux. We see him from the front with his arms still crossed. We can see Guillemartz with the operators at the station in the background, several meters in the distance.

3. GUILLEMARTZ: Something else has come up...

PANEL FOUR.

Destraux uncrosses his arms and begins to walk toward the reader.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

We see Destraux from behind. He heads towards the forest.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

We zoom out further, with Destraux only a few feet from the tree line. The division of soldiers he leads follows in a unified formation behind.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We return to Shinara's living quarters with Shiazar, Pansheer, and Shinara all sitting around the table. They all hold teacups.

1. SHIAZAR: So what is the next lesson?

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Shinara, as she pulls her teacup from her lips.

2. SHINARA: A history lesson...

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to Shiazar. He turns to Pansheer, who is scratching his head.

3. SHIAZAR: History? I thought we were training.

PANEL FOUR.

We shift back to Shinara. She sets the cup on the table.

4. SHINARA: Yes... it is crucial to your training.

Shinara stands up and walks toward the painting Shiazar had noticed earlier.

5. SHINARA: You see, your father and I were husband and wife...

PANEL FIVE.

We shift back to Shiazar and Pansheer. They both sip their tea with their eyes wide open.

6. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): He had an affair with another woman.

PANEL SIX.

We shift focus back to Shinara with one hand on her hip, her other hand gracing the man's face on the painting.

7. SHINARA: That woman was your mother.

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 12

CHARACTERS:

Cyrouz Zoro'niah- Shiazar's biological father and a former minister of Zhelshera.

Khorzekov Zorhawk- The current ruler of Zorraqia and a former minister of Zhelshera.

Xanthos Alleros- A former minister of the Zhelshera.

Prince Lazul

SETTING:

Shinara's hideout.

Zhelshera, a large vessel capable of space travel that houses a large society that devotes the resources of the ship to creating or terraforming planets into habitable environments for humans. The interior of the ship consists of a variety of ores and metals.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTY-TWO AND PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THREE.

PANEL ONE.

We see a large object in space. It is a massive ship, polygonal and glassy in its appearance, vaguely resembling a female humanoid. The shiny, stubby arms are the front wings, which form points at each side, and the crystallized curled legs in the back are the engine thrusters. The breasts resemble upside down pyramids, and the head of the ship above is shaped like a rhombus facing out horizontally. This panel is a splash page that takes up both pages.

1. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): You see, that orb you touched is a beacon to Zhelshera; she is a living entity who serves as the core source of energy for the ship in which she resides. Each planet that has been terraformed and colonized from her powers yields a beacon as a communications resource for the new civilizations that she creates. Your father was the one of the four ministers who orchestrated rebuilding and creating new worlds using that ship's assets. I was his secretary and assistant before we married...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We go to the interior of the ship. We see a large hallway with gold trim, platinum decor, and a crystallized ceiling. The floor consists of opaque glass with a grid of silver beams intertwined for support. The walls are made of a foggy, white, smoothed-out crystal, with pillars of gold and platinum spaced several yards apart. There are several people walking down the hall in different directions; their attire consists of robes and capes of an assorted variety of colors and styles. Many wear tall, cylindrical hats or metallic crowns, with some of the women wearing tiaras with headscarves. They all wear either knee-high boots or point-tipped loafers.

1. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): He was the Minister of Justice, and while he failed in his loyalty with me, he made up for it in his commitment to Zhelshera's purpose. Unfortunately for him, he was surrounded by lies, wars, and hatred.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

We see a man from the behind, dressed in white robes, a white cape, and a golden crown. His arms crossed, he glares out a window at the stars.

1. ZORO'NIAH: What is going on out there?

PANEL TWO.

We shift focus to a younger Shinara at the doorway to Zoro'niah's quarters. She holds a folder of documents that she presses against her chest. Her other hand rests on the frame of the door. Her attire consists of dark gray robes and a light gray cape.

2. SHINARA: The better question is, what is going on here?

PANEL THREE.

We shift back to Zoro'niah, his head now turned over his shoulder, reminiscent of Shiazar's earlier vision of him. We see his long dark curled beard, which covers the bottom half of his face. One of his large eyebrows arches up in inquiry to Shinara's statement.

3. SHINARA: The council meeting is in fifteen minutes. I advise using that time to go over my investigation.

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out to show both Zoro'niah and Shinara in the same shot. Shinara extends her hand with the folder outward.

4. ZORO'NIAH: What's this?

5. SHINARA: A conclusive analysis regarding questionable ethics in relation to the ambitions of the leadership of this vessel.

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom in on Zoro'niah's hand. It grabs hold of the folder from Shinara's grasp.

6. ZORO'NIAH: I see...

7. SHINARA: Not yet, open it.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom back out, as Zoro'niah silently reads the contents of the folder while Shinara waits with her arms crossed.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We zoom focus on Zoro'niah's face, which expresses puzzlement and nervousness.

3. ZORO'NIAH: This... this can't be.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom out of the room again. Zoro'niah looks over at Shinara, who nods her head in disgust.

4. SHINARA: Found yourself a nice secret side girl on that secret planet of yours?

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus back to Zoro'niah, who protests in anger.

5. ZORO'NIAH: I assigned you to investigate the recent events, and you used the assets I trusted you with to spy on me?

PANEL FIVE.

We shift back to Shinara, who retorts with a passive-aggressive expression.

6. SHINARA: I trusted that your loyalty to me mirrored our loyalty to the cause. I was tipped off to your conjugal visits while I was on the task you assigned me.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom out to show both Zoro'niah and Shinara with their arms in the air; they are both in a fit of rage in the heat of the argument.

1. ZORO'NIAH: There are treasonous saboteurs wreaking havoc across the galaxy, and you are fixated on your own personal agenda?!
2. SHINARA: That is not all, the other ministers have informed me of the true nature you hide under your charismatic facade.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Zoro'niah, who expresses bewilderment.

3. ZORO'NIAH: True nature?! The other ministers?!

PANEL THREE.

We zoom out again to reveal the two. Zoro'niah storms past Shinara to exit the room.

4. ZORO'NIAH: I have a meeting to catch.
5. SHINARA: I hope they are wrong about you...

PANEL FOUR.

Zoro'niah stops in the doorway and faces away from the reader out of the room.

6. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): ...I wish I was wrong about you.

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom in Zoro'niah, who turns his head back to the reader to address Shinara.

7. ZORO'NIAH: I know I've failed you as a husband, but I swear I have no involvement in these other accusations.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT.

PANEL ONE.

We shift to Zoro'niah from the front. He walks out of the room. Shinara can be seen over his shoulder in the room.

1. ZORO'NIAH: When I am done dissecting lies with these deviants, we will further discuss our personal matters.

PANEL TWO.

We shift to Shinara, and we see Zoro'niah in the distance over her shoulder. She turns away from him, and he closes the door behind him.

2. SHINARA: Sigh...

PANEL THREE.

We see Zoro'niah rushing through the same large hall as before; it is void of human presence this time, however.

3. ZORO'NIAH: Wait, where is everyone?

PANEL FOUR.

We see Zoro'niah's backside, as he stands before a large double door; the engravings on the door resemble the hieroglyphics on Shiazar's sword.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

Zoro'niah pulls a sword out from under his robe.

4. SFX: SHING!

PANEL SIX.

Zoro'niah holds the sword up in the air in front of the door; the sword glows and reacts with the symbols on the door, making them glow as well.

5. SFX: ZRRZZZZRZZZ!!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINE.

PANEL ONE.

We see the large door open from the opposing side. With Zoro'niah in the center at a point-perspective, the doors are only a quarter of the way open. We see a long carpet from the entry leading to the reader.

1. UNKNOWN: Ah, you are late. Such disrespect for an honorable position.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in Zoro'niah's face. It expresses anger in a similar vein to Shiazar's, albeit more restrained.

2. UNKNOWN #2: A lack of commitment, your wife can relate I'm sure.

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to the unseen side of the room where the antagonizing voices are coming from. The room is a large dome with a set-up similar to a parliament or congressional hall, or a courtroom. There four chairs with three men seated at a large podium. They are too distant to make out in detail. The rest of the seats on the floor are filled with the people we saw in the hall earlier. We see Zoro'niah in the foreground; the rest of the panel visible over his shoulder.

3. ZORO'NIAH: You leave my personal affairs out of this! What's the meaning behind these accusations of treason?!

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in closer on the podium and three men. The man in the center has a black moustache and wears black robes and cape, with a platinum crown. The man on the right is blond-haired and blue-eyed and wears white robes and cape, with a tall cylindrical hat with golden ornate feathers. The man on the left is pale and sickly, with part of his face covered, and wears red robes and cape, with a scarf and a silver tiara.

4. ANNOUNCER: Before we commence the meeting, we present the three judicial officials for this prosecution hearing!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FORTY.**PANEL ONE.**

We shift to Zoro'niah's face, his anger turns to fear.

1. ZORO'NIAH: Prosecution?!

PANEL TWO.

We shift focus back to the three men.

2. ANNOUNCER: Our benevolent leaders...

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to the man in red. He reluctantly raises his hand in affirmation.

3. ANNOUNCER: ...the Minister of Love...

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to the man in white. He raises his hand to wave with more enthusiasm.

4. ANNOUNCER: ...the Minister of Truth...

PANEL FIVE.

We shift focus to the man in black. He holds his hand out with a clenched fist.

5. ANNOUNCER: ...and the Minister of Peace...

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 13

CHARACTERS:**Shinara****Zoro'niah****Zhelshera****Shiazar****Pansheer****SETTING:**

Zhelshera (ship).

Shinara's hideout.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FORTY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We see a woman from behind, who runs down a hall similar to the one Zoro'niah used earlier.

1. SHINARA (PRESENT): I wish I hadn't let my insecurity get the best of me. But those devious men preyed on my emotions for a reason...

PANEL TWO.

We see the front side closeup of the woman, revealed to be Shinara. A source of light from an opening illumines the bottom half of her face.

2. SHINARA (PRESENT): ...they needed bait for their trap.

PANEL THREE.

We see Shinara from behind, as a door slides up vertically in front of her. We see a large chamber with the crystallized egg containing Zhelshera in the center of the room.

3. SHINARA (PRESENT): But I had to ask someone I knew was incapable of lying.

PANEL FOUR.

We see Shinara from a diagonal view, slightly overhead. She reaches her hand out, touching the crystal shell.

4. SHINARA (PRESENT): I had to ask her. I knew she had all the answers...

PAGE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

This panel is a splash panel, and it takes up three quarters of the page. We zoom in from Shinara's perspective to see the naked Zhelshera, who places her hand on the opposite side of the crystal wall where Shinara's hand remains.

1. SHINARA (PRESENT): The real question at the time for me was...

PANEL TWO.

We see Shinara. She sits with one leg crossed on her chair in the living room in present time, with Shiazar and Pansheer in the foreground. They both sit on the floor, with both legs crossed and their hands on their knees.

2. SHINARA: ...did I really want to know the answer?

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FORTY-THREE.

PANEL ONE.

We return to the court hearing to see Zoro'niah from his backside. He stands in the middle of the foreground and faces the podium with the three ministers.

1. MINISTER OF PEACE: Cyrouz Zoro'niah, Minister of Justice, through a joint investigation we have come to a conclusion regarding the recent tragedies and disasters in our humanitarian efforts...

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on the three ministers; both Peace and Truth have condescending stares, while Love expresses uncertainty.

2. MINISTER OF PEACE: ...that you are held accountable for these incidents of sabotage and are hindering progress for mankind.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on the Minister of Peace. His face has a deadpan expression. This panel takes up the bottom third of the page.

3. MINISTER OF PEACE: You abused your position of upholding justice when convenient for yourself; your motives and ambitions simply do not align with our society. Your cult personality has brainwashed susceptible populations to commit horrendous acts in your favor. You are hereby stripped of your ministry position and charged with high treason. How do you plead?

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We shift back to Zoro'niah from a diagonal view, slightly overhead. He lifts his head up to address the ministers.

1. ZORO'NIAH: I request a duel for my acquittal.

PANEL TWO.

We shift back to the Ministers of Truth and Love. They turn their heads to the Minister of Peace, who smirks.

2. MINISTER OF PEACE: And who might your requested opponent be?

PANEL THREE.

We shift to a profile view of the scene, with Zoro'niah standing before the ministers, the court attendance behind him. They lean forward with eager anticipation for confirmation.

3. ZORO'NIAH: You, Zorhawk, and it's not a request. This is the last dignified option you have left before the rest of the people in this room discover you are everything you pretend not to be. Using me as the scapegoat canvas upon which you paint your self-portrait, you have created a clear illustration for me... you are a minister of war, not peace.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIVE.**PANEL ONE.**

We shift focus on Zorhawk (the Minister of Peace). He puts his hand to his chin. The other two ministers turn to him for confirmation.

1. ZORHAWK: The punishment for high treason is death, and your request is more or less the same process.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom on Zorhawk. He relaxes his arm and lowers his hand from his face.

2. ZORHAWK: You are requesting that I personally conduct the execution... to which I graciously agree.

PANEL THREE.

We shift back to Zoro'niah. He faces the reader with a confident stance and smug expression. The audience of the court all sit in silence behind him.

3. ZORHAWK (DISEMBODIED): This court session is adjourned!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We fast forward to a prison cell where we see Zoro'niah. He sits on a cot in a prison uniform consisting of gray coveralls. He stares at the ground and twiddles his thumbs. We see a decline in his hygiene, his hair long and unkempt without his crown, his beard matted, and his eyes crusted over.

1. SHINARA (DISEMBODIED): Cyrouz...

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Zoro'niah, who looks up to see his addresser.

2. ZORO'NIAH: Shinara?

PANEL THREE.

We see the cell from the backside as Zoro'niah walks up to the bars of the cell to get closer to Shinara who stands on the other side.

3. ZORO'NIAH: Shinara, I need to explain...

4. SHINARA: I'm so sorry...

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in on Shinara. Her appearance reflects a significant amount of dishevelment and distress.

5. SHINARA: I spoke with Zhelshera shortly after our argument... She already explained everything to me.

PANEL FIVE.

We shift to Zoro'niah resting his head on the bars, he closes his eyes.

6. SHINARA: So, don't worry, you don't have to.

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 14

CHARACTERS:**Shiazar****Pansheer****Shinara****Destraux****SETTING:**

Shinara's chambers.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We return to Shinara's chambers in the present. Shiazar and Pansheer sit in awe in the foreground. They face away from the reader toward her, and she holds her teacup with both hands under her chin.

1. SHINARA: ...that's when I forgave him.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Shiazar from the mid-chest up. He expresses interest.

2. SHIAZAR: What exactly did Zhelshera explain to you?

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Shinara, who takes a sip from her teacup, her eyes closed.

3. SHINARA: That your conception was vital...

PANEL FOUR.

We see the room from Shinara's perspective. Shiazar and Pansheer both sit with their legs crossed and hold their teacups in anticipation.

4. SHINARA: ...to the survival of humanity.

PANEL FIVE.

We shift focus to Shiazar dropping his teacup, Pansheer spews his tea out.

5. SFX: CLACK!

6. SHIAZAR: WHAT?!

7. SFX: SPLLEEEWWW!

PANEL SIX.

We return to Shinara, who turns her head back to the painting of Zoro'niah.

8. SHINARA: Zhelshera has a particular way of conveying communication sometimes...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHT.

PANEL ONE.

We shift focus to the painting of Zoro'niah from Shinara's perspective.

1. SHINARA: She told me that regardless of morality in a farmer's placement of seeds... your family tree...-

PANEL TWO.

We see a large gloved hand puncture the painting from the other side.

2. SFX: CRACK-CRUMBLE!

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to Shinara from the waist up. The large hand grasps her face.

3. SFX: SCHWICK!

4. SHIAZAR (DISEMBODIED): Shinara!

5. PANSHEER (DISEMBODIED): No!

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out from the room to reveal Destraux. He lifts Shinara up from the ground by her head. Shinara struggles to finish her words.

6. SHINARA: ...had to be... planted.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FORTY-NINE.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom out further to reveal Shiazar and Pansheer dash towards Destraux in an attempt to save Shinara. Destraux remains in the same position holding Shinara.

1. SHIAZAR & PANSHEER: AAAGH!

PANEL TWO.

We see Destraux's face mask close up, and his eyes emit a fluorescent white that leaves an afterglow while he turns to confront the oncoming attackers.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We zoom back out to see Destraux in full, his hand still grasping a subdued and weakened Shinara. His other arm goes into full swing, and the backside of his fist hits Pansheer in the side of the head, knocking him out cold.

2. SFX: WOOSH!

3. SFX: THWACK!

3. PANSHEER: UGH!

PANEL FOUR.

We see Pansheer collapse onto Shiazar, and they both hit the floor.

4. SFX: THUMP!

5. SHIAZAR: AGH!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY.

PANEL ONE.

We see a panicked Shiazar struggling to get up while he attempts to move the unconscious Pansheer off his legs. His face emits a frantic expression.

1. SHIAZAR: It's me you want... leave her out of this!

PANEL TWO.

We return focus to Destraux, who stands in the same place, looking over at Shiazar in the foreground while he holds Shinara.

2. SHINARA: You're not ready for this.

3. SHIAZAR: Put her down now!

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to a full body shot of Destraux holding Shinara by her face.

4. SHINARA: Head to Erothi and find Karza!

PANEL FOUR.

We shift over to a closeup of Shiazar. His face expresses puzzlement and he mutters to himself.

5. SHIAZAR: Karza?

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom in Destraux from the mid chest up, as he turns back to Shinara.

6. SHINARA: Now run!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom in on Shinara from the shoulders up. Destraux's hand encases most of her face in a black leather grip. He begins squeezing her head.

1. SFX: SQUISHHH...
2. SHINARA: ARRRGGGGHHHHH!

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Shiazar. He screams in horror.

3. SHIAZAR: NOOOO!

PANEL THREE.

We return to the previous shot of Shinara. The front of her skull implodes from the crushing pressure of Destraux's hand. Brains, tissue, and bone fragments ooze from between his fingers, sticking to the creases of the glove.

4. SFX: SPLACK!

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out on Destraux. He glares at Shiazar in the foreground and releases his grip on Shinara. Her corpse drops to the floor.

5. SFX: THUD!
6. SHIAZAR: ...no...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

We shift focus to Shinara's corpse on the ground. The front half of her face is caved in, her jaw reduced to crushed bits sticking to her tongue, her nose and cheeks are now one large gore hole, and her eyes and brains are compressed into a pink mush with patches of her hair interwoven.

1. SHIAZAR: ...you bastard.

PANEL TWO.

We shift back to Shiazar. He lifts himself up to a combat posture. Pansheer remains unconscious on the floor near his feet.

2. SHIAZAR: So, did you come for me?

PANEL THREE.

We shift to Shiazar's back, as his arm reaches above his shoulder to unsheathe his sword from his belt strap.

3. SHIAZAR: Or maybe...

4. SFX: SCHIIICK!

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out of the room with Shiazar and Destraux in full view. Shiazar holds his blade out towards Destraux.

5. SHIAZAR: ...you came for this?

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THREE.**PANEL ONE.**

We shift our view to Shiazar's perspective. Destraux stands a few meters ahead of him. The hole in the wall where the painting had been placed encircles Destraux from behind. Zorraqian soldiers breach the demolished wall from behind to back up Destraux.

1. SHIAZAR: Afraid of settling this one-on-one?
2. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIERS: Target acquired. Go! Go! Go!

PANEL TWO.

The soldiers begin to take aim at Shiazar in an organized formation with an officer's signal.

3. ZORRAQIAN OFFICER: Subdue and apprehend the boy!

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to Destraux, who lifts his blood-covered fist up into the air.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

The officer and soldiers look over at Destraux in unison and acknowledge the signal.

4. ZORRAQIAN OFFICER: Lower your weapons! Hold your positions!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

The soldiers lower their weapons with caution while the officer takes a few steps back.

1. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIERS: Affirmative.

PANEL TWO.

We shift back to Shiazar, still poised for a duel with sword in hand.

2. SHIAZAR: Well you might be a bastard, but at least you aren't a cowardly piece of shit.

PANEL THREE.

We shift back to Destraux. He partially opens his trench coat, revealing a belt with a large sheathed sword underneath. Only the curved polished ebony handle and arched titanium hilt are visible.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in on Destraux's clean hand pulling the sword out from the belt. It appears to be a broad scimitar, although it is too large to be wielded with one hand by the average man.

3. SFX: SCHWANG!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIVE.**PANEL ONE.**

We see Destraux in full body view from Shiazar's perspective, the soldiers stand aside behind and to his sides. He holds his large sword in one hand as if it were a cleaver. His other hand, still covered in blood, is poised in front, pointing towards the reader. His eyes emit fluorescent bright white light. This panel takes up two-thirds of the page.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We shift back to Shiazar from the waist up, his eyes glowing gold, his teeth grinding against each other, and the veins around his face bulging with anger. He stands poised, ready to charge with his sword, which he holds with both hands in preparation to compensate for a large foe with a large weapon.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIX.**PANEL ONE.**

We zoom out to see a horizontal view of the room with Shiazar charging Destraux with his sword arched over his shoulder in preparation for an overhead strike. Destraux remains still, holding his sword in the same manner as previously shown. His other arm lowers from his earlier taunt.

[NO DIALOGUE]

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 15

CHARACTERS:**Shiazar****Destraux****Pansheer****General Guillemartz****Prince Lazul****SETTING:**

Shinara's chambers, the outlying forest, the White Palace.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SEVEN.**PANEL ONE.**

We see Shiazar from the front in full view, as he charges towards the reader. He grasps his sword with both hands on the hilt, and arches the blade over his right shoulder and to the side of his head. His face expresses anger beyond his usual spectrum of lashing out, but he channels it into a meditated focus. His eyes leave an afterglow of yellow light. This panel takes up the entire page.

1. SFX: CLOP! CLOP! CLOP! CLOP! CLOP!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY-EIGHT.**PANEL ONE.**

We shift focus back to Destraux. We see him from the front in full view. He twirls his scimitar in his left hand. His eyes radiate artificial light that emanates from under his metallic visor while a black smog emits from the crater of his crown. The soldiers who once stood in close proximity to Destraux now stand much farther away, barely fitting on both edges of the page. This panel takes up the entire page.

1. SFX: WHISH-WIFF!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY-NINE.**PANEL ONE.**

We zoom in on Destraux's free hand. It hangs at his right hip, Shinara's blood seeping from between his fingertips.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We remain focused on Destraux's hand. It raises and stretches out to its full length. He flicks his index and middle finger to splatter the blood outward. We see Destraux from his mid-chest up behind the focal point of his hand.

1. SFX: THWICK!

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in Shiazar's face. The blood drops splatter across his eyes, and he squints and tilts his head to the side upon contact. He grits his teeth in disgust.

2. SFX: SPLAT!

3. SHIAZAR: UGH!

PANEL FOUR.

We shift back to Destraux, who swings his scimitar horizontally from his left side in an attempt to behead Shiazar.

4. SFX: SHWOO!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTY.

PANEL ONE.

We shift focus to both of the wielder's blades with a black background to better illustrate the glow that emanates from the hieroglyphs. Shiazar's sword arches diagonally downward to intercept the horizontal swipe of Destraux's blade. The collision creates a large spark due to both blades being enchanted with similar mystical powers.

1. SFX: CLANG!!

PANEL TWO.

We zoom out to show both Shiazar and Destraux in full view. The view is a one-point-perspective image with the blade collision at the center. Shiazar and Destraux are seen from their sides, but their profiles are angled based on the momentum of their sword swings. The Zorraqian forces encircle the combatants in the background and foreground and silently watch. The backside of the Zorraqian helmets outline the bottom of the panel. Shinara's corpse can be seen in the lower bottom right of the panel in a pool of blood, and an out-cold Pansheer can be seen in the upper left corner of the panel, facedown.

2. SHIAZAR: Urghhhh...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We see Shiazar on his left knee, the upper half of his face dotted with the blood spatter. He grits his teeth and struggles to keep the force of Destraux's blade from knocking him out of his defensive stance. His arms extend to his left side, with both hands on the hilt, the blade tilting diagonally downward to his left.

1. ZHELSSHERA (DISEMBODIED): Remember what you have learned these past few days...

PANEL TWO.

We see Shiazar from behind in the same stance as in the previous panel, with Destraux in the background in frontal view. His eyes glare downwards toward Shiazar. Destraux reacts to the unanticipated struggle in his attempt to subdue Shiazar with the pressure of his sword. He begins to lift his other hand up to conjure up something.

2. ZHELSSHERA (DISEMBODIED): ...utilize the elements, Shiazar...

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to Shiazar's blood and sweat-covered-face, his veins bulging around his brow and temples, his teeth grinding against each other, and his eyes squinting with a golden glow.

3. SHIAZAR: URGGHHHH!

PANEL FOUR.

We shift back to Destraux's arm vertically poised above his shoulder, his palm open. Small needles resembling stingers protrude where his fingerprints would be. They emit static that gravitates toward the middle of the palm of his hand, where we can see a hole that is one inch in diameter. It glows the same fluorescent white that Destraux's eyes typically display.

4. SFX: ZZZRRRZZZ!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

We see both blades locked. The background is solid black to illuminate the metallic sheen.

1. ZHELSSHERA (DISEMBODIED): ...utilize them...

PANEL TWO.

We shift focus to Shiazar's glowing eyes.

2. SHIAZAR (THOUGHT): Of course!

PANEL THREE.

We zoom out from the blades to see Shiazar's and Destraux's arms. Destraux's scimitar begins to liquefy into metallic beads.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to Destraux's face, his eyes larger and brighter than before.

3. SHIAZAR (DISEMBODIED): You're fucked.

PANEL FIVE.

We see Shiazar's sword cut through the dissipating scimitar. The metal beads radiate around the point of impact in a slow gravitational explosion.

4. SFX: VLOP!

PANEL SIX.

We pan back to Destraux's hand, an energetic orb hovering above the hole in the palm, his fingers emitting electric shock into the energy source.

5. SFX: ZZZZRRRZZZRRR!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THREE.**PANEL ONE.**

We zoom out to reveal Shiazar and Destraux in full view from a profile angle. Shiazar's blade moves in an upward diagonal right momentum past the dissipating scimitar and cuts off Destraux's arm with the orb. We see Destraux's arm is entirely mechanical, as wires and sparks are visible from both sides of the cut.

1. SFX: KERZITZZZ!

PANEL TWO.

We see a closeup of Destraux's face looking away from his previous glare towards Shiazar towards his right side.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to a portion of the crowd of the surrounding Zorraqian military. They raise their weapons and express panic in their faces.

2. ZORRAQIAN OFFICER: Take cover!

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in on Shiazar's face as he shifts his eyes to his left to address the panic.

3. SHIAZAR: ...shit.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We shift to the focus of everyone's attention in the room. Destraux's arm falls towards the floor with the energy orb still stable in its grasp.

1. SFX: ZZZZRRRZZZRR!

PANEL TWO.

We see the hand land on its back side. The orb bounces off the palm.

2. SFX: SHWOOOOO!

PANEL THREE.

The orb flies back into the wall, past the Zorraqian crowd, and to the side of the room where the soldiers came from earlier.

3. SFX: ZZZRRROOO!

PANEL FOUR.

We see the orb make an impact on the wall close to where the painting used to be, creating an explosion.

4. SFX: BOOOOM!

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 16

CHARACTERS:**General Guillemartz-**

Prince Lazul- The current ruler of Co'mosiah, and a puppet for Zorraqian interests.

Shiazar-**Pansheer-****SETTING:**

The White Palace, the royal residence of Prince Lazul, which lies at the heart of the Comosian capital Erothi, a large city that seems to be in a ceasefire from a recent city-wide conflict.

Shinara's dilapidated hideout.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

We see an overview of the Comosian capitol, Erothi. The sunset illuminates the skyline from behind the city view. The sun is partially visible behind the White Palace as it is halfway past the horizon. The palace marks the center of the city and contributes the majority of the verticality of Erothi, with most buildings exceeding no more than a dozen stories in height. The palace's design features a uniform coating of ivory, and the architecture is asymmetrical, with rectangular towers forming posts within the walls surrounding the palace and its courtyard. Large white granite bricks comprise the bottom third of the walls and palace, and seamless, clean, slated stone comprises the upper two-thirds of the structure. We can see a glimpse of the lavish garden canopies over the walls. The palace itself intertwines and connects with walls and courtyards and features over a dozen towers in its main structure, which resemble the towers alongside the outer wall, except that they are more ornate and feature cupolas made of marble. The palace itself towers over the rest of the city, as does the Zorraqian military headquarters on the outskirts of the city in the background and a large temple closer to the foreground of the view. The rest of the city's architecture consists of tightly clustered rectangular and square buildings with flat roofs or triangular clay tiled roofs. There are large smoke stacks sporadically spread across the city and on a few of the buildings including the Zorraqian military headquarters in the back. This panel takes up the entire page.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We move to the interior of the palace to reveal a wide shot of an open throne room. The decor and design are aesthetically similar to the exterior of the palace. A man sits on the throne with two guards to each of his sides, and a man standing at the base of the stairs of the throne platform. The figures are too far away to make out details, but the three on higher ground are in white clothing with the figure at the base appearing to wear black.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: We need to address some mutually concerning issues.

PANEL TWO.

The man in black, upon a closer look, is revealed to be Guillemartz. We have a frontal view of him, as he stands and addresses the man in the chair before him. He tilts his head upwards as he speaks to make eye contact with this person.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: First off, what is the status of this uprising?

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to the man Guillemartz addresses, we see a full body view of Prince Lazul, sitting on his ivory throne. His expression lacks any concern. His eyes wander into internal thought, while he seals his lips. His right leg crosses over his left, and he rests his chin on his right hand. His dark hair fades up to his temples and above his ears into a clean cut parted to the right with a shiny gel finish. He sports a clean shave that compliments his jawline and large cleft chin. A long nose and rectangular eyebrows draw attention to his piercing blue eyes. His attire consists of a Victorian-era regal uniform, colored white with gold trim, and impractically ornate with medals, decorations, and tassels. His boots are of fine leather, brown in color, and reach to the knees.

3. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): ...and how are you handling it?

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom in on Lazul from the waist up. His blank stare of a face gazes slightly left to the reader. His chin remains on his hand.

1. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Or does this lack of attention already reflect upon the value of your contract?

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Guillemartz from the mid-chest up. He tilts his head to the left and expresses confusion.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We pan back to Lazul from the waist up, as he begins to lift himself up from his posture. He pulls his face away from his hand.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to Lazul's legs from the knee down, as he begins to uncross his legs.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

We shift the view from behind Lazul's chair. He presses down on the armrests to pull himself up. We see the backside of his upper body, arms, and head in view with Guillemartz obscured at this angle, and the two guards visible only by their adjacent hands and rifle barrels.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL SIX.

We pan back to Guillemartz from the mid-chest up, his confused expression inflected with annoyance and his head shifting back into a straight posture.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: Time is no longer a luxury you have.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTY-EIGHT.**PANEL ONE.**

We shift back to Lazul from the knees up. He stands before his throne. His face remains the same.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Lazul's eyes, the sky blue of his iris emit a cold radiance void of empathy.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in from behind a hand at waist level, the fingers coiling back to contain a small flame.

1. LAZUL: The only rising here is the smoldering fragrance of fatalities.

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out from a diagonal view of Lazul from his backside, we see him from the mid thigh up. He fully extends his right arm out with his palm open to release a blazing spew of flame engulfing the guard on his right.

2. SFX: FFFWWOOOOOOO!

3. WHITE GUARD: ARRRGGGHHH!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SIXTY-NINE.

PANEL ONE.

We rotate the angle to see the front view of Lazul, who holds his arm out casually as he emits flames from his palm while the guard's silhouette collapses. His face remains void of emotion and fixates towards Guillemartz.

1. SFX: FFF-WOOF!

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on a rifle with one hand nervously grasping the front grip and the other frantically operates the bolt action.

2. SFX: CHIK-CHIK!

PANEL THREE.

We zoom out to reveal the guard on the left side from the waist up. His rifle is aimed at Lazul. His knees buckle and tremors radiate through his body. His uniform is more regal than practical in design, similar to the prince's but on a much less ornate and detailed scale, and it includes a cylindrical shaped cap with a shiny bill on the front complimented by a feather plume centered above it.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in on the barrel of the rifle from the side as it fires off a shot that creates a gun flash.

3. SFX: KOW!

PANEL FIVE.

We see the bullet in trajectory from the side with motion blurring all around it and obscuring the background in a haze.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY.

PANEL ONE.

We see the bullet strike against Lazul's temple. We can see him from the waist up. The force of the impact pushes his head to the right, but his body remains stationary.

1. SFX: THOK!

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on the point of impact on Lazul's head to reveal the bullet barely pressed against the close-cropped skin on the temple. A red glow radiates around the bullet and seeps through the veins under the skin in the surrounding area.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We zoom out on the prince from the knees up. He reaches with his left hand to pinch the bullet with his thumb and index finger and pulls it away from his head.

2. LAZUL: As for your concerns regarding my effectiveness...

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out a bit more from Lazul to include the guard who fired the shot next to him mid-attempt to take another shot while he expresses panic and shock. Lazul turns the guard and begins to approach him casually.

3. LAZUL: How's this for handling?

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom in on Lazul and the guard from the waist up. Lazul reaches his hand out under the guard's chin and extends his index and middle finger, which now glow red at the tips, upward towards it.

4. WHITE GUARD: NO!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom on Lazul's increasingly illuminated two fingers, which press against the guard's gullet under his chin, leaving a radiance of red in the veins similar to what we saw from Lazul earlier.

1. LAZUL: ...yes.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom out on Lazul and the guard from the knees up. The pressure from the bullet's impact Lazul absorbed earlier transfers to the point of pressure on his fingers, shooting through the guard's skull. The flat top of the cylinder cap explodes with skull fragments, bits of brain tissue, and blood. The guard's mouth drops open and pours blood while the eyes pop out from the front. Lazul stares emotionlessly at the guard.

2. SFX: PLEWWW!

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Lazul's face. Blood spatters across his face in tiny specks. He turns his head to address Guillemartz.

3. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): You have made your point.

PANEL FOUR.

We shift back to Guillemartz from the mid-chest up. He smirks with a conniving grin.

4. GUILLEMARTZ: Now to address the other issue at hand...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

We return to Shinara's dilapidated chambers. Piles of rubble cover the majority of the room. Dead Zorraqian soldiers and officers are seen in, on, and under the debris, with no clear view of Shiazar, Pansheer, or Destraux.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on one of the piles of rubble that is oddly-shaped like a rocky egg. We can see vibration in the rocks.

1. SFX: ...crumble-rumble...

PANEL THREE.

We zoom slightly further in. Shiazar's hand emerges with an open palm with the upper forearm underneath.

2. SFX: CRUMBLE!

PANEL FOUR.

We see the pile of rubble disperse in every direction, revealing Shiazar and Pansheer. Pansheer is still out cold at Shiazar's feet and lies face down. Shiazar moves his free hand in a swiping motion, directing the debris away, while his other hand holds his sword lowered at his side.

3. SFX: CRACK-UMBLE!

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom out a bit to show Shiazar sheathing his sword and kneeling down towards Pansheer.

4. SHIAZAR: You're always knocked out when I do something cool.

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar pulls Pansheer over his shoulder.

5. SHIAZAR: Let's get out of here.

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 17

CHARACTERS:**Shiazar****Pansheer****General Guillemartz****Prince Lazul****Karza****Zorhawk****Destraux****SETTING:**

Shinara's dilapidated hideout.

The White Palace.

Zorraqian military Headquarters on Co'mosiah.

The streets of the capital Erothi.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-THREE.

PANEL ONE.

We see the cave entrance of Shinara's hideout that Shiazar and Pansheer entered several chapters ago. Shiazar walks out of the dark of the cave with Pansheer slumped over his shoulder, still out cold.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Shiazar with Pansheer slumped over his shoulder. He walks through the surrounding forest.

1. SHIAZAR: ...head to the capital...

PANEL THREE.

We see Shiazar from his backside. He exits the forest through the tree line. We can see the light of day shining through between the trunks of the trees and the canopy.

2. SHIAZAR: ...find Karza...

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in on Shiazar and Pansheer and shift the view to Shiazar's right side. He sets Pansheer down to rest against a tree stump outside of the forest. Pansheer remains unconscious, and we can see a cloud-free sky and open, flat plains of tall grass in the background.

3. SHIAZAR: We don't have time for your epilepsy, man!

PANEL FIVE.

We shift view to Shiazar's shoulder, as he looks down at Pansheer and slaps him across the face and wakes him in the process.

4. SFX: SMACK!

5. PANSHEER: OW!

PANEL SIX.

We shift the view to a one-point perspective with the sunrise serving as the focal point. Shiazar and Pansheer, in the foreground, look toward it. Shiazar puts his hands on his hips, and Pansheer rubs his eyes and remains leaning against the stump.

6. PANSHEER: What now?

7. SHIAZAR: Looks like you and I are making a trip to Erothi.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We return to the White Palace, where we see General Guillemartz walking alongside Prince Lazul down a hallway. There are elaborately detailed white marble pillars and golden chandeliers placed throughout the corridor. We can see the general talk with his hand gestures towards the prince, who locks his hands behind his back and looks slightly downward and listens.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: So, with the information I have provided you regarding these individuals...

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in further on the two. Lazul lifts his head up and turns to Guillemartz as he finishes his address to him.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: ...will you be able to provide my men with the local support needed to secure the operation?

PANEL THREE.

We focus on Lazul from the waist up. His face remains void of emotion as he responds to the general's question.

3. LAZUL: I am willfully bound and obligated to fulfill the agreed contract.

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to Guillemartz from the waist up. He smirks in approval.

4. GUILLEMARTZ: A mutual understanding of our self preservation.

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom out to show Guillemartz and Lazul end their exchange with a handshake.

5. GUILLEMARTZ: Zorhawk's will is our fate. Do not take his beneficial presence for granted.

PANEL SIX.

We shift focus back on Lazul. His face twitches, and he displays a subtle hint of fear.

6. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Do not forget the gift he gave you in return for your servitude.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

We see Guillemartz exit through the hall door in the background. Lazul remains in place in the foreground.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We see Guillemartz exit to the palace exterior to reveal a rooftop platform where a helicopter awaits with the propeller blades in motion. We can see the other palace towers in the background, and smoke that rises in the distance.

1. SFX: WOO-WOO-WOO!

PANEL THREE.

We shift view to focus on Guillemartz's backside as he heads towards the aircraft. Two Zorraqian guards wait by the open door on the side of the vehicle.

2. SFX: WOO-WOO-WOO!

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

Guillemartz sits in one of the seats of the helicopter while the other two guards secure the door.

3. SFX: SLAM!

PANEL FIVE.

We shift focus to the pilot. He prepares for takeoff while he addresses the general.

4. ZORRAQIAN PILOT: Set course destination, sir?

PANEL SIX.

We pan back to Guillemartz in his seat. He crosses his legs and clasps his hands together.

5. GUILLEMARTZ: Military HQ.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We return to Shiazar and Pansheer. They walk across a field of tall grass side by side. The shot is at a diagonal overview to showcase their travels. There are a few trees scattered about, but the panel clearly emphasizes that they are far from the forest from which they left.

1. PANSHEER: So, while I was unconscious you managed to blow up that behemoth and his posse and save us both with a barrier of debris you created in a second?

2. SHIAZAR: Yeah.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Pansheer from the waist up. He scratches the side of his head in disbelief.

3. PANSHEER: I'd like to call bullshit, but based on this last week, the line between bullshit and reality has become a blur.

PANEL THREE.

We shift to Shiazar from the waist up. He smirks and continues to walk forward.

4. SHIAZAR: I'm relieved to know this experience has chipped away at your insistent skepticism.

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out to Shiazar and Pansheer in full body view of their front sides. They walk towards the reader.

5. PANSHEER: So... once we get to Erothi, what comes next?

6. SHIAZAR: I spoke too soon, didn't I?

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom in on the two from the waist up. Shiazar partially unsheathes his sword to check the brightness of the blade. Pansheer turns his head towards the sword with curiosity.

7. SHIAZAR: All I know is that we need to find someone named Karza.

8. PANSHEER: Karza? Who's that?

9. SHIAZAR: Not sure.

(CONTINUED)

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SIX CONTINUED.**PANEL SIX.**

We zoom in on the partially exposed blade, which glows blue as the symbols morph again.

10. SHIAZAR: I'm sure your questions will be answered soon.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We shift focus back to the exterior of the White Palace. We can see a large balcony where Comosian government and military officials are standing. In front of the palace we see a large crowd gathering on the streets of Erothi.

1. COMO'SIAN OFFICIAL: Your attention, please!

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in further to reveal the prince. He emerges from behind the officials and makes his way to a microphone set up at the front of the balcony.

2. COMO'SIAN OFFICIAL: For your prince and his city address!

PANEL THREE.

We rotate the view to Prince Lazul's backside. He stands in front of the banister with his hands clasping one another from behind. We see a few of the Comosian officials' hats in the foreground behind Lazul. We see the town square ahead of Lazul where most of the crowd has gathered for the announcement. Far off in the distance we can see the Zorraqian military headquarters.

3. LAZUL: My fellow countrymen...

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to a diagonal overhead of the crowd of his subjects. They stand in silence and anticipation.

4. LAZUL (DISEMBODIED): ...I am a man of peace and unity, and I condemn these acts of terrorism that have caused you all so much pain and suffering.

PANEL FIVE.

We shift to Lazul from the front side. We can see him from the waist up behind the banister. He raises his right arm up and bends his forearm back with his fist clenched. His left hand rests on his left hip. His facial expresses a serious disdain.

5. LAZUL: The conflict has been resolved. The civil unrest will subside. Any attempt to disrupt the peace again will have much more severe consequences.

PANEL SIX.

We zoom on Lazul from his shoulders up.

6. LAZUL: Some of you question our newfound allies and their presence here. Their intentions are mutually beneficial, I assure you. Our society will receive technology that will solve all our problems for generations to come.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-EIGHT.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom out from Lazul. His hands grasp the banister and he leans forward. The Comosian officials stand silently behind him.

1. LAZUL: They will only grant us these gifts if we return the favor, however. There has to be mutual benefit for the interests of both parties, after all.

PANEL TWO.

We rotate to Lazul's backside, at a slightly overhead angle. He remains in the same position.

2. LAZUL: They seek two individuals. Two criminal-minded terrorists with vile tendencies and a sadistic lust for instability.

PANEL THREE.

We see two Comosian officials unravel giant posters on each side of where Lazul stands.

3. LAZUL: One you may already be somewhat familiar with...

PANEL FOUR.

One poster unravels on Lazul's right side. We see the woman's image from the computer screen at the Zorraqian military headquarters several chapters ago.

4. LAZUL (DISEMBODIED): Karza Lescht! The leader of our domestic terrorist cell!

PANEL FIVE.

We shift back to a close up of Lazul's face.

5. LAZUL: As for the other individual, he hails from the savage wilderness where culture is replaced with barbarism.

The other poster unravels on Lazul's left side. We see Shiazar's face plastered across it.

6. LAZUL (DISEMBODIED): Shiazar! The mass murderer responsible for the genocide of Pom'eh!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINE.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom out to a one-point perspective view of the city square. The balcony and the prince serve as the focal points in the distance, with a hooded head in the foreground perpendicular to the focal point.

1. LAZUL: Large compensation will be bestowed on any citizen who provides valuable information regarding the whereabouts of these two monsters.

PANEL TWO.

We rotate around the hooded figure to show the front of the person. We can see part of the woman's face, from the lower half of the nose to the chin, but the rest of her face obscured in shadow.

2. LAZUL (DISEMBODIED): Be warned, however, that they are both extremely dangerous and skilled in the arts of witchcraft!

PANEL THREE.

We see the hooded figure lift her head up slightly to reveal the woman's face to be Karza's.

3. LAZUL (DISEMBODIED): I bid you all good will and faith, my loyal subjects!

PANEL FOUR.

We see Karza lower her head and turn around to cut through the crowd.

4. LAZUL (DISEMBODIED): Disperse, and resume your daily duties!

PANEL FIVE.

We see Karza walking out from the gathering towards the reader. Her cloak that covers most of her body and her face lowers back so we can only see the bottom portion of her face.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY.

PANEL ONE.

We shift the setting to the Zorraqian military headquarters. We see Guillemartz from behind in full view. He looks out towards the city from a large window that stretches across the room.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Guillemartz at the same angle. Another, lower-ranking officer approaches his right side to hand him a phone.

1. ZORRAQIAN OFFICER: Sir, the supreme leader is on the line.

PANEL THREE.

Guillemartz turns his head to address the officer. He nods and takes the phone and puts it to his ear.

2. GUILLEMARTZ: Your Excellency, I was just about to contact you.

PANEL FOUR.

We pan to Zorhawk's office. We can see the top of Zorhawk's desk and his left hand resting on the end in front of his torso. The rest of his appearance is obscured by the panel view.

3. ZORHAWK: You should have informed me of her sightings earlier.

PANEL FIVE.

We shift back to Guillemartz from the collar up. He holds the phone nervously, and his eyes open wide.

4. GUILLEMARTZ: We only recently acquired a clear image of her, sir.

5. ZORHAWK (DISEMBODIED): And the boy?

PANEL SIX.

We go back to Zorhawk. We see his phone pressed against his ear. His nose, moustache, and partially opened mouth can be seen, but his eyes and upper face are obscured in shadow.

6. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): I have Destraux tracking him as we speak. We have Erothi alerted of his presence and search parties in the countryside. He will be facing pressure from all sides before long.

7. ZORHAWK: Destraux's signal has gone dark. What is his current status general?

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We shift to Guillemartz. He pulls the phone away from his ear and looks over his shoulder to his desk with a computer on it.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: I need to inform the search parties of this matter.

PANEL TWO.

We shift back to Zorhawk. We can see his face from the front, only the lower half of the nose to the chin are visible. He speaks into the phone with his hand while his other hand opens its palm and levitates a small metal ball.

2. ZORHAWK: Maybe sparing you from the purge of corruption on Zhelshera was a mistake.

3. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Sir?

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Zorhawk's hand holding the metal orb. It begins to dissipate into dust.

4. ZORHAWK: You have seventy-two hours to fulfill the objectives I have tasked you with.

PANEL FOUR.

We shift back to Guillemartz from his front side, waist up. He holds the phone with one hand while he uses the other to press single keys on the keyboard.

5. ZORHAWK (DISEMBODIED): Do not disappoint me again Guillemartz.

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom in on Zorhawk's hand, his fingers fully extended outward as the levitating metal orb completely disintegrates into scattered explosions of dust in the shape of a ring.

6. GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Sir, wait-

7. SFX: CLICK!

PANEL SIX.

We return to Guillemartz, from the collar up to his face. He lowers the phone and stares towards the reader, where the computer monitor rests.

8. GUILLEMARTZ: ...Destraux's signal...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-TWO.**PANEL ONE.**

We return to Shinara's destroyed home. The piles of rubble and corpses remain untouched and unnoticed.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on one of the piles of rubble near the middle of the room. It begins to vibrate.

1. SFX: RUMBLE-CRUMBLE!

PANEL THREE.

We see a large metallic hand with a torn and burned sleeve punch through the rocks at the peak of the pile at an upward angle.

2. SFX: BRACKOW!

3. SFX: CRUMBLE-CRUMBLE!

ZHELHERA
CHAPTER 18

CHARACTERS:**Shiazar****Pansheer****Karza****General Guillemartz****Prince Lazul****Destraux****Juh'rad****SETTING:**

The city of Erothi and its outskirts.

The White Palace.

Zorraqian military headquarters.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THREE.

PANEL ONE.

We return to Shiazar and Pansheer. They stand beneath the canopy of a tree with their backs turned to the reader. Erothi can be seen in the distance a few miles away. There are several farms and cottages on the outskirts of the city. Shiazar leans against a tree while Pansheer stands on the opposite side of the tree with his hands on his hips.

1. SHIAZAR: Well, Pansheer... there she is.
2. PANSHEER: Who?
3. SHIAZAR: I was referring to the city, stupid.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on the front side of the two from the waist up. Shiazar crosses his right arm and rests his left hand under his chin in a calculative manner. Pansheer holds his left hand over his eyes and surveys the city from their position.

4. SHIAZAR: Zorraqians have a military presence here, and the royal army's support. I suggest we obtain attire that will help us blend in with the locals.
5. PANSHEER: How do you suggest we go about that?

PANEL THREE.

We shift focus to Shiazar's face, he squints his eyes to focus on something he sees in the distance.

6. SHIAZAR: A closet raid...

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus to Pansheer from the neck up. He turns his head towards Shiazar with a puzzled expression on his face.

7. PANSHEER: What?

PANEL FIVE.

We shift focus to behind the two, from over their shoulders. Shiazar points forward towards one of the cottages on the farms.

8. SHIAZAR: The third house on the left, the family just left for town.
9. PANSHEER: Ah, great idea. But how do we find this person we are looking for?

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We shift focus back to Shiazar, seen from the front from the knees up. He unsheathes a couple inches of his blade to check the radiance of the glow.

1. SHIAZAR: The sword seems drawn to the site of Karza's whereabouts.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom out to show Shiazar and Pansheer in full view. They face the reader. Shiazar places his sword back in his sheath, while Pansheer scratches the side of his head.

2. PANSHEER: I wonder if it's drawn to this person, or if it's something this person possesses...

3. SHIAZAR: We can wonder another time. Let's check out that house.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom out to show Shiazar and Pansheer sneaking across the tall grass of the farms.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FOUR.

We see the exterior of the cottage Shiazar intends to sneak into. It resembles the farmhouses of Pom'eh in its design. We can see Shiazar and Pansheer in the foreground with only the backs of their heads and shoulders visible.

4. SHIAZAR: We should check the front windows first just to be safe.

5. PANSHEER: Agreed.

PANEL FIVE.

We see Shiazar from behind. He peers into the window by the front door.

6. PANSHEER (DISEMBODIED): I don't see anything, do you?

PANEL SIX.

We see Shiazar's face press against the window from the interior of the cottage. He puts his hands over his eyes to block sunlight.

7. SHIAZAR: Nope.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

We see Shiazar's hand in a closeup, as it pulls the door handle.

1. SFX: CREEEEK...
2. SHIAZAR: Proceed with caution.

PANEL TWO.

We see Shiazar with Pansheer behind him, standing in the doorway from the interior view. The light from the doorway shines in the dark cottage.

3. SHIAZAR: You check the right side; I'll check the left side.
4. PANSHEER: Got it.

PANEL THREE.

We see Shiazar from the front, from the waist up, with the top of a dresser in the foreground. He opens the top drawer.

5. SHIAZAR: Perfect.

PANEL FOUR.

Shiazar pulls out two beige cloaks from the drawer.

6. SHIAZAR: I got us covered, Pansheer.

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar turns his head back to look over his shoulder.

7. SHIAZAR: Pansheer?

PANEL SIX.

Shiazar walks softly towards the opposite side of the cottage, to the door Pansheer left open.

8. SFX: CREEK-CREEK-CREEK

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We see Shiazar from the front, in full view, walk through the doorway into the other room. He starts to unsheathe his sword to illumine his surroundings.

1. SHIAZAR (WHISPERING): ...Pansheer?

PANEL TWO.

Shiazar holds the sword horizontally to brighten the space ahead of him. His face shows a surprised expression.

2. SHIAZAR: Oh shit.

PANEL THREE.

We see a young teenage girl aiming a short sword-length blade in her right hand at Shiazar; it emanates red and purple energy that encases her hands in the aura. She wears a black, long-sleeve dress with baggy pants underneath and a pair of worn felt shoes that point up at the toes, and her hair is dark, messy, and medium in length. She wears a tiara with red roses. She holds another energy blade in her left hand, which she holds under Pansheer's throat.

3. GIRL: What are ya doing here? Where you get the blade?

PANEL FOUR.

We shift to Shiazar. He lowers his weapon in an attempt to defuse the situation.

4. SHIAZAR: We didn't mean any harm, we just needed...

5. GIRL (DISEMBODIED): Wait a minute!

PANEL FIVE.

We shift back to the girl. She remains on guard in her body language, but her face brightens up and her eyes widen. Pansheer remains on his knees with the blade close to his throat, nervously tilting his head over at her.

6. GIRL: You're that guy the prince was bitchin' bout.

PANEL SIX.

We shift to Shiazar from the waist up. He sheathed his sword while expressing confusion.

7. SHIAZAR: Pardon?

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom out of the room to include the three individuals in view.

1. GIRL: Yeah, prick Prince be bitchin' lots lately, but the ya'neva answered me question.
2. SHIAZAR: I got this sword back in the village of Pom'eh... my father gave it to me in passing.

PANEL TWO.

We shift focus to the girl. She lowers her hands and her energy blades disappear. Pansheer looks over and begins to edge away.

3. GIRL: Aye, Prince said you massacred that village, but I don't believe anything that twat says.

PANEL THREE.

We shift to Shiazar, who expresses shock.

4. SHIAZAR: Erothi thinks I am responsible for that? It was the Zorraqians, not me.

PANEL FOUR.

We shift focus back to the girl from knees up; she talks with high energy and enthusiasm.

5. GIRL: Yeah, they point fingas at ya for what they be doing. Just like they did with me best mate Karza.

PANEL FIVE.

We shift back to Shiazar. His eyes widen and his mouth gapes. Pansheer stands at his side and dusts off his pants.

6. SHIAZAR: Wait! You know Karza?

PANEL SIX.

We shift back to the girl.

7. GIRL: Aye, I do.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHT.**PANEL ONE.**

We zoom out to show all three characters in the room.

1. SHIAZAR: Where can I find her?
2. GIRL: Put them there cloaks on ya' first, and I'll take ya to her.

PANEL TWO.

We see Shiazar and Pansheer pull the hoods over their heads and prepare to leave the cottage. The girl holds the door open for them to exit first.

3. GIRL: My name is Sheika by the way.

PANEL THREE.

Shiazar lifts his hooded head up to address her on his way out.

4. SHIAZAR: I'm sure you already heard mine.

PANEL FOUR.

We see an overhead view of the three. They traverse the road to one of the city entrances in the encircling wall. We can see pedestrian traffic thicken the closer we get to the city.

5. SHEIKA: Mosey like meeses and we will be fine.
6. PANSHEER: You mean mice?
7. SHIAZAR: Don't be a dick.
8. PANSHEER: Right. I get taken hostage, and I'm the dick.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE.

PANEL ONE.

We see the three go through the bustling streets, as the citizens go about their workday.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on the group. Shiazar and Pansheer walk forward with their heads lowered in their disguises. Sheika wears the same outfit as when she was introduced. She looks up and towards the reader while the three cross the street.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We see from Sheika's perspective. Laborers hammer and paint over the marks of destruction in a citywide repair following the earlier conflict.

1. SFX: CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

PANEL FOUR.

We shift view to the front of the three characters, Sheika leads at the front, and they walk towards the reader in full view. Shiazar and Pansheer lift their heads slightly to see ahead.

2. SHEIKA: Well, fellas, here we are.

PANEL FIVE.

We see the exterior of a café; the front sides of the beige brick building are glass in the middle third of the walls, with bakery products visible for inspection. A small and subtle sign above the door reads bakery and coffee. The three characters' heads in the foreground face the structure.

3. SHIAZAR: Coffee and bread are the backbone of your operation?

4. SHEIKA: Just a low-key front for our real operation.

5. PANSHEER: I am tired and hungry, so this works out.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETY.

PANEL ONE.

The trio enter through the front door, and we see them walk in from the interior of the café. Shiazar and Pansheer lift their heads up all the way but keep their hoods over their heads. Sheika calls out to the visible employees, one of whom sweeps the floor while the other wipes down a table.

1. SHEIKA: Close her down, boys.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Sheika from the waist up. She reaches for the blinds by the side of the door and closes them.

2. SHEIKA: Wait here.

PANEL THREE.

We see the three from behind, as Sheika makes her way past the counter toward a back door and turns her head over her shoulder to address Shiazar and Pansheer.

3. SHEIKA: Get comfy then, might be ya last time to enjoy a relaxin' sit down.

PANEL FOUR.

We see Shiazar and Pansheer pull their hoods off their heads.

4. SHEIKA (DISEMBODIED): My mates will energize the two of ya with bread, buttah, and the strong black.

5. SHIAZAR: Sounds good...

6. PANSHEER: Thank you.

PANEL FIVE.

We see Shiazar and Pansheer take a seat at a table with a long bench on each side. They both sit facing the counter.

7. SHIAZAR: I wonder what this Karza has that Shinara intended for us to find.

8. PANSHEER: Yeah... still can't believe she went out like that.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETY-ONE.

PANEL ONE.

We see the café from a diagonal overview. Shiazar and Pansheer remain seated, and the two employees each bring a tray, one with coffee and the other with baked goods.

1. WAITER: Here you are, enjoy.
2. SHIAZAR: Thanks.

PANEL TWO.

We see Shiazar sip on a mug of coffee, Pansheer chomps into a hard loaf of bread.

3. SFX: SLUUURRRP!
4. SFX: CRUNCH! CRUNCH!
5. KARZA (DISEMBODIED): So, you're the maniac of the Pom'eh massacre?

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Shiazar. He lowers his cup, and his eyes enlarge with surprise.

6. SHIAZAR: Huh?

PANEL FOUR.

We pan over to the other side of the café to reveal Karza standing in full view. She faces the reader. A fairly tall and fit young woman close to Shiazar's age, we can see her high-volume, dark brown hair in a longer bob cut. Her large eyes are a dark oak brown. Her eyebrows have a distinctive natural beauty with eyelashes that almost match her hair's thickness. Her face is soft, but her expression suggests a hardened core behind it. She wears a black trench coat, dark grey trousers, and knee-high black leather boots. She crosses her arms and crosses her left leg over her right to lean in against the counter.

7. KARZA: What brings fine rural folk like yourselves to my establishment?

PANEL FIVE.

Shiazar stands up from the table. Pansheer continues to shove bread in his mouth.

8. SHIAZAR: Shinara sent me.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETY-TWO.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom in on Karza's face, her expression shifts status from coy to concern.

1. KARZA: Shinara sent you? She was supposed to be here a few days ago.

PANEL TWO.

We pan back to Shiazar, who walks towards Karza and struggles to find the right words.

2. SHIAZAR: Yeah... she... uhhh...

PANEL THREE.

We pan back over to Pansheer, who lifts his head up from his gorging to address Karza.

3. PANSHEER: She didn't make it.

PANEL FOUR.

We shift back to Karza, seen from the waist up. Her eyes enlarge to convey a combination of surprise and sadness. Her mouth opens slightly to take a quick breath. Her head shifts focus from Shiazar to Pansheer.

4. KARZA: What?!

PANEL FIVE.

We shift back to Shiazar, who gets within a couple feet of distance from Karza and puts his hand on her shoulder in an attempt to comfort her.

5. SHIAZAR: I'm sorry. Zorraqians ambushed us at her hideout.

PANEL SIX.

We zoom in on Karza, who lowers her head slightly. One tear rolls down her cheek.

6. KARZA: She must have sent you in her place.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETY-THREE.

PANEL ONE.

We shift to see Karza from behind, with Shiazar in front of her. He removes his hand from her shoulder, and Pansheer stops eating and leans forward with anticipation.

1. SHIAZAR: In her place?

PANEL TWO.

We rotate the perspective of the room, with Karza at the center, facing the reader. She addresses the room, with Shiazar in front of her. Pansheer gets up from the bench to listen. Sheika pokes out from the back door she went through earlier.

2. KARZA: Yes, she was going to aid us in our final push. To rid our city of the plague of Zorraqian vermin and that puppet of a prince they project their will through.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Karza. She puts her hand to her temple in anguish.

3. KARZA: But we are drained of resources and time, and we lack manpower after our failed attempt.

PANEL FOUR.

We shift to Sheika from the waist up, as she comes out from the door with exclamation.

4. SHEIKA: He's got a sword like yours!

PANEL FIVE.

We shift back to Shiazar and Karza and they turn their heads to Sheika.

5. KARZA: Oh?

6. SHIAZAR: Wait what?

PANEL SIX.

We zoom in on Karza, she opens one side of her coat and partially unsheathes a sword identical to Shiazar's.

7. KARZA: Like this?

ZHELHERA

CHAPTER 19

CHARACTERS:**Shiazar****Pansheer****Karza****Sheika****General Guillemartz****Destraux****Juh'rad****SETTING:**

Karza's base of operations, an underground bunker located beneath the café. The floor is dirt, the walls are condensed clay dirt, and wooden beams and pillars support the ceiling and walls with lanterns hanging from them. A network of tunnels dug by her resistance members connects to the cobblestone sewers of Erothi, giving her organization great mobility against Zorraqian forces and the White Guard.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETY-FOUR.

PANEL ONE.

We zoom in on Karza's sword, which is identical to Shiazar's. The sword is centered in the foreground of the panel, and it radiates light from the hieroglyphs on the blade. Shiazar and Pansheer are in the background, on the left and right respectively. They stand with their hands on their heads and express astonishment.

1. SHIAZAR: Another one?!
2. PANSHEER: No way!

PANEL TWO.

We shift focus to Karza, who stands with her left leg forward, while her right hand holds the sword up to the ceiling. Her face expresses a serious look with a glare of determination. Sheika leans against the counter in the background and takes little interest.

3. KARZA: There are four.

PANEL THREE.

We shift back to Shiazar and Pansheer by the table; their faces express shock, but they lower their arms to their sides.

4. SHIAZAR: Four? There's four swords like this?

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom out of the room to show the four characters in full view in the café. Karza sheathes her sword, and Sheika picks her nails on the right side of the panel. Shiazar reaches inside his robe, while Pansheer reaches for another piece of bread from the table on the left side of the panel.

5. KARZA: Correct.
6. SFX: SCHIK!
7. SHIAZAR: Interesting...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIVE.

PANEL ONE.

We focus on Shiazar, who unsheathes his sword from under his robe.

1. SFX: SCHWANG!
2. SHIAZAR: I thought there was only one of these.

PANEL TWO.

We zoom in on Karza from the waist up. Her right hand remains on the hilt of her sword and her eyes enlarge.

3. KARZA: Come with me.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom back out of the room, Sheika opens the door behind the counter while Karza leads Shiazar and Pansheer through.

4. KARZA: I figured you were in possession of something special when I saw your face at Lazul's address.
5. SHIAZAR: Come again?

PANEL FOUR.

We see the four descend a wooden staircase.

6. KARZA: The Prince held a public propaganda rally. He used our portraits to deflect blame from himself.
7. SHIAZAR: How did they get portraits of us?

PANEL FIVE.

We see the four in a wine cellar, Shiazar and Pansheer stand at the base of the staircase. Karza stands over a trap door while Sheika opens the latch.

8. KARZA: Zorraqian's have access to some highly advanced reconnaissance equipment.
9. SHIAZAR: I see...

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETY-SIX.

PANEL ONE.

We see the four descending on a ladder into an abyss of darkness with only a few candles along the wall. Sheika takes the rear in the descent at the top of the ladder, with Pansheer below her, Shiazar below him, and Karza leading at the bottom.

1. SHIAZAR: So, where are we going?
2. KARZA: To our base of operations.

PANEL TWO.

We see the four standing at the base of the ladder. Sheika points her finger upward at an angle.

3. KARZA: Sheika, lights.

PANEL THREE.

We see lanterns flickering with light to reveal a room resembling a mineshaft entrance. The four characters stand in the foreground from their shoulders up.

4. KARZA: Welcome to Resistance H.Q. guys.
5. SHEIKA: Ain't nuffin fancy for eyes is it?
6. PANSHEER: I'll say.
7. SHIAZAR: Where do all these tunnels lead?

PANEL FOUR.

We see the four from an angled aerial view.

8. KARZA: Our tunnel network intertwines with the sewers and catacombs of the city.
9. SHIAZAR: Stealthy approach to mobility and access, impressive.

PANEL FIVE.

We zoom in on the four from the waist up. Karza holds her first upright below her chin. Sheika presses her first against her palm and lifts her shoulders.

10. KARZA: That's the only way to fight these fuckers.
11. SHEIKA: They neva see it comin neitha!

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETY-SEVEN.

PANEL ONE.

We focus on Shiazar and Karza from shoulders up. Karza faces the reader, resting her chin on her fist.

1. SHIAZAR: So, what's the plan?

PANEL TWO.

We shift to Karza's face. Her eyes glow gold.

2. SHIAZAR (DISEMBODIED): ...Karza?

PANEL THREE.

We zoom out from Karza's face, as her eyes return to normal. Shiazar, behind her, expresses confusion.

3. KARZA: We disrupt their network before they find ours.

4. SHIAZAR: Their network?

PANEL FOUR.

We focus on Karza from the knees up. She dramatically turns half-way toward the reader to address Shiazar.

5. KARZA: Their headquarters was built around a portal capable of intergalactic travel. It's how they found Co'mosiah. They assembled their base of operations at the source to secure access here.

PANEL FIVE.

We shift back to Shiazar from the waist up. He grasps the hilt of his sword.

6. SHIAZAR: Lead the way.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETY-EIGHT.**PANEL ONE.**

We see the exterior of the Zorraqian military headquarters outside of Erothi.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL TWO.

We see the interior; Guillemartz stands in the main hall with an assembly of troops behind him.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Guillemartz's face, as he smirks.

1. GUILLEMARTZ: Look who's back from the dead...

PANEL FOUR.

We see Destraux standing at the main entrance. His uniform is torn and burnt, his mask and crown are mangled, and wires dangle from where his arm used to be. The light in the doorway offsets the full extent and detail of the damage.

[NO DIALOGUE]

PANEL FIVE.

We shift to two Zorraqian soldiers in the assembly.

2. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #1: Man, he really is indestructible.

3. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #2: It's a bit ironic isn't it?

PANEL SIX.

We see the two Zorraqian soldiers' backsides from the shoulders up. They continue their whispering.

4. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #1: What do you mean?

5. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #2: You've never heard the story?

6. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #1: No.

PAGE ONE-HUNDRED AND NINETY-NINE.

PANEL ONE.

We focus on the two soldiers' faces from the shoulders up.

1. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #2: He was once a decorated commander who was close with Emperor Zorhawk, but one day he got too close.
2. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #1: Too close?
3. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #2: He had a fondness for Zorhawk's daughter, but Zorhawk already intended her for a suitor he approved of.

PANEL TWO.

We see Destraux from his backside, as he ascends the stairs.

4. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #1 (DISEMBODIED): So, what happened then?
5. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #2 (DISEMBODIED): Zorhawk apparently was going to let it slide on account of Destraux's position, but that was before Zorhawk found Destraux with his daughter's naked corpse.

PANEL THREE.

We zoom in on Destraux's boots on the stairs.

6. ZORRAQIAN SOLDIER #2: Zorhawk spared Destraux from execution, but in exchange for something much worse. He's imprisoned with that indestructible curse of immortality, serving an endless sentence.

PANEL FOUR.

We zoom in Destraux's face mask, as the eyes light up.

7. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): I'd like to introduce you to your partner.

PANEL FIVE.

We see a thin, lanky man in a black trench coat from his backside. His long, black hair touches his shoulders. He approaches the assembled troops.

8. GENERAL GUILLEMARTZ (DISEMBODIED): Ah there he is now!

PANEL SIX.

We shift focus to the man's face, revealing it to be Juh'rad. His lower jaw is now a metallic implant.

[NO DIALOGUE]

































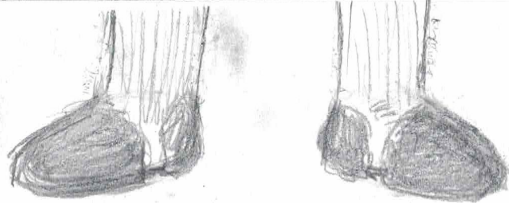
(Blutiger Hühner)

Commander Blutiger Hühner



















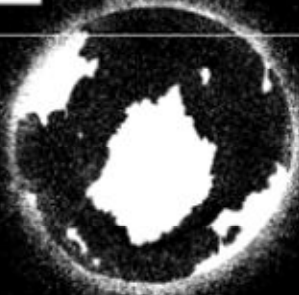








**SEVERAL CENTURIES OF
PEACE HAVE BEEN
ENDURED WITH THE
CONTENT PEOPLE OF
CO'MOSIAH**



PROSPERITY WAS ASSUMED ETERNAL.

**HOWEVER, CHANGE IS INEVITABLE
AND THE AMBITIONS OF SELFISH
INDIVIDUALS TEND TO MAKE THE
WORST OF IT.**



**THESE HORRID
ENTITIES THAT CALL
THEMSELVES MEN
WANT NOTHING MORE
THAN GODLIKE STATUS
TO TURN HUMANITY
INTO A SOULLESS HUSK
BOUND TO SLAVERY
THEY CALL
DEDICATION OF FAITH
TO THEIR 'CREATORS'**



WAR IS RIDING ON STEEL-COVERED TREADS, TITANIUM-PLATED MACHINES, AND CHROME-TRIMMED UNIFORMS THAT REPRESENT ALL THOSE LOYAL TO MAN WITH A GOD-LIKE AUTHORITY, AND HIS ENDLESS THIRST FOR CONQUEST THAT HAS CONDEMNED COUNTLESS WORLDS PRIOR TO ENSLAVEMENT AND GENOCIDE.



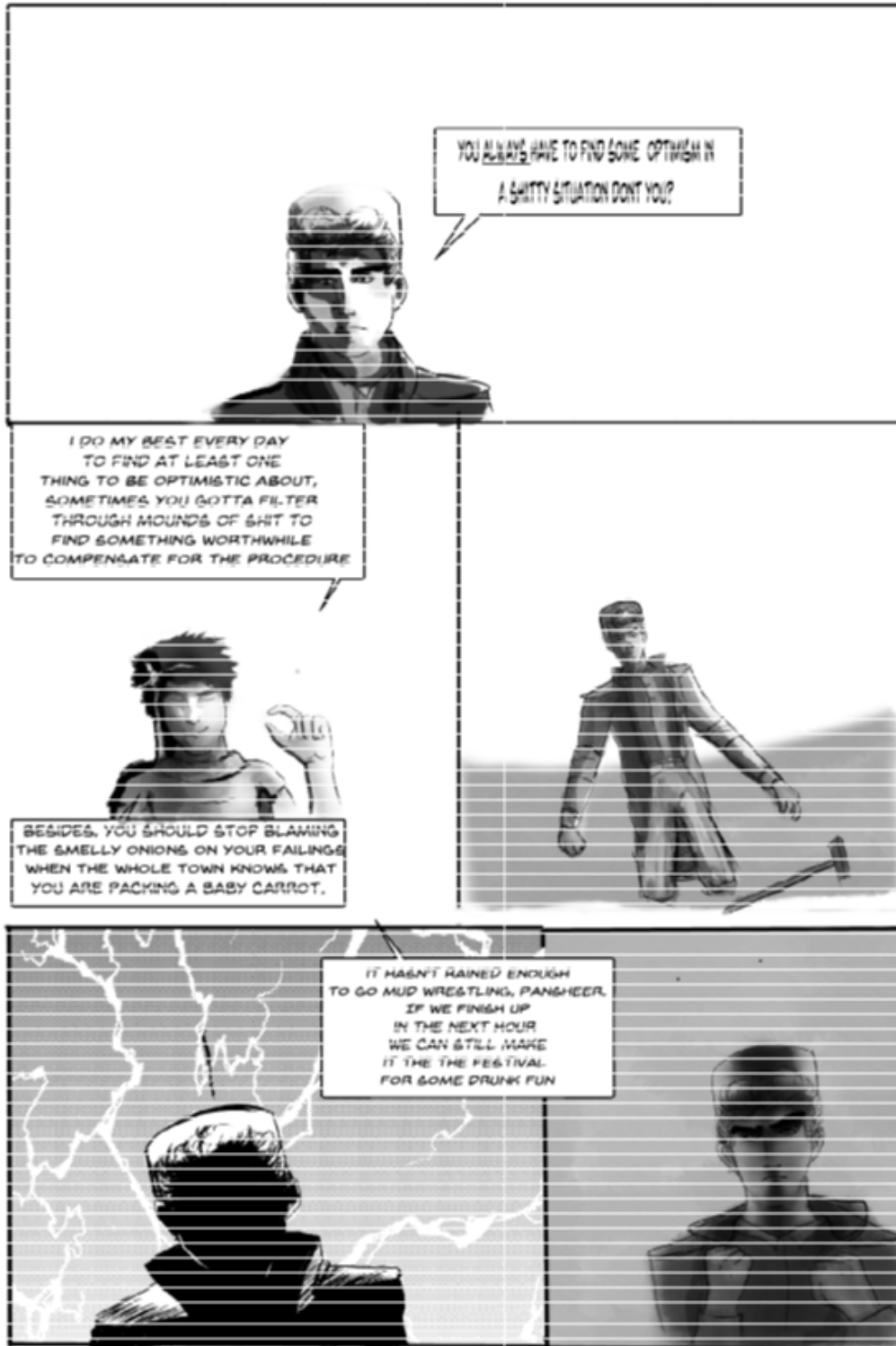
TODAY IS A CELEBRATION OF THE HARVEST, AN ANNUAL TRADITION IN THE SMALL RECLUSIVE VILLAGE OF POM'EH CROWDS OF PEOPLE ARE PREPARING FOR THE FESTIVITIES. AMONG THE INHABITANTS ARE A COUPLE OF SLACKERS WHO HAD NOT YET FINISHED THEIR WORK, FRANTICALLY ATTEMPTING TO FINISH THE JOB IN TIME TO MAKE IT THERE BEFORE ALL THE WINE IS GONE.



SOMETIMES I WONDER IF THEY TASK US WITH THESE SMELLY VEGETABLES, TO DETER FEMALES. NO GIRL IN THIS VILLAGE IS EAGERLY AWAITING THE SMELL OF ONION TO ENTICE HER.

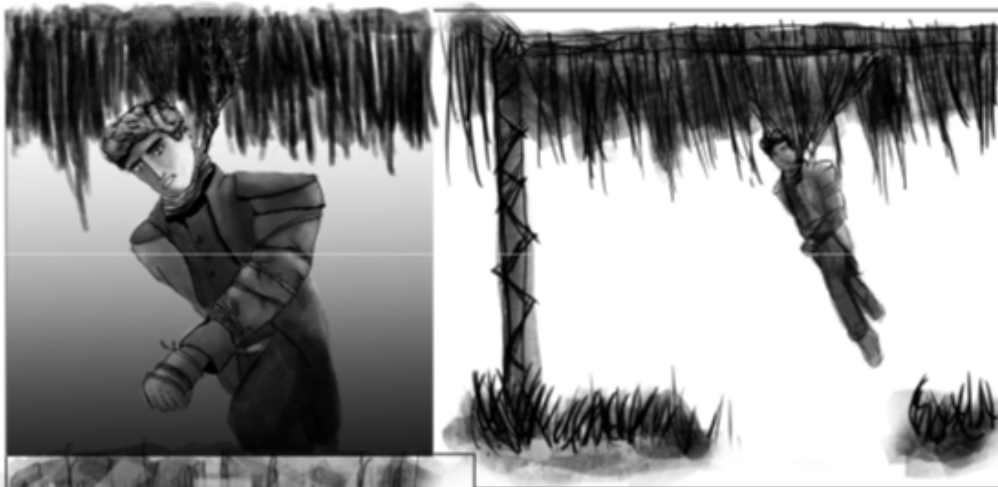


AT LEAST WE WERE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO AVIOD GARLIC DUTIES THIS TIME.









WHAT THE FUCK JUST HAPPENED?

I SHOULDN'T HAVE LOST MY TEMPER
LIKE THAT. BUT, WE CAN MAKE UP LATER,
LET ADDRESS THE INCIDENT THAT JUST OCCURRED HERE

WHAT ABOUT IT? IM NOT SURE EITHER OF US REALLY
KNOWS WHAT THAT WAS ALL ABOUT. THE
ONLY THING I AM SURE OF IS THAT IM GOOD ON THE WINE FOR A WHILE.











